https://archive.org/details/bk375/page/n0/mode/1up

2002-12 -The Tale of Hidden Pir -ISIM (375)

All Items on https://archive.org/details/realpatidar

realpatidar.com Full Library on https://realpatidar.com/library

international institute ISIM for the study of islam in the modern world

Newsletter 11

December 2002 | 40 pages

postal address
P.O. Box 11089
2301 EB Leiden

telephone
+31(0)71 527 79 05
fax
+31(0)71 527 79 06

e-mail
info@isim.nl
homepage
http://www.isim.nl

9
Isa Blumi
Indoctrinating Albanians: Dynamics of Islamic Aid

12
Ziauddin Sardar
Desperately Seeking Paradise: Journeys of a Sceptical Muslim

27
Lara Deeb
Women's Islamic Community Service in Beirut

33
Joel Beinin
Neo-Conservatives Threaten Academic Freedom

Converts and the Making of European Islam

The visibility of converts to Islam in the media has recently undergone an exponential increase – mainly in the United States. There was the case of Jonny Walker, labelled 'Jonny the Taliban', born into the wasp upper class, who was apprehended as *mujahid* in Afghanistan. Then there was Jos Padilla, the would-be terrorist who was seized in an airport loaded with explosives. Finally, John Allen Williams came on the scene. Of Jamaican ancestry, born in Louisiana, this former American soldier in the Gulf War became the serial killer that terrorized Washington in October 2002 by killing 13 people in cold blood. These three tales have nothing in common, apart from the fact that all three protagonists are converts to Islam.

STEFANO ALLIEVI

PHOTO: STR, © REUTERS 2000

Former British pop star Cat Stevens, now Yusuf Islam.

These three tales of converts to Islam also have in common that they all deeply affected the American imagery and brought about a reawakening, or even the discovery of an interest in the Islam of converts, which until recently – with few exceptions – was mainly considered to be a phenomenon limited to the black Muslims movement of Elijah Muhammad and nowadays of Louis Farrakhan (of whom John Allen had been a follower), and consequently almost thought of as an 'ethnic' oddity.

In Europe, attention paid to conversion to Islam has begun to gather momentum in the last years and has opened up to research into the role of some Sufi groups, trajectories of the feminine conversions, and the role of converts in Muslim associations. Nevertheless, literature on the matter remains rather scarce, especially when compared to that of the so-called 'new religious movements', some of which have a smaller membership compared to converts to Islam.

The highest number of conversions to Islam is brought about by a cause that has little to do with the search for spirituality, namely marriage (following the Islamic rules, a non-Muslim male cannot marry a Muslim woman without converting). Such a reason for conversion may contradict the principle of freedom of religion and of conscience as it developed in the West, but is normally lived without special problems by people who, often, are hardly religious, and are consequently little disturbed by this choice. These conversions have generally no great impact on the lives of the individuals and of the couples, and often not even on that of their offspring. As a matter of fact, conversion under these circumstances is a means to reach another aim (marriage), not an end in itself.

However, other trajectories to conversion, which, like the previous ones, can be called 'relational', even if far less numerous, are the ones that have the greatest impact: on the lives of the individuals, but also on that of the Islamic communities in Europe. In the list can be included the 'discovery' of Islam through meeting Muslim believers, while as a tourist or on a business trip to Muslim countries, or through meeting an immigrant in Europe and eventually falling in love with him or her (it is the case of several mixed couples, even when the conversion is not compulsory, as in the case of a non-Muslim woman marrying a Muslim man).

A different model of conversion is that of the 'rational' conversions. Here we can refer to the intellectual conversions, 'cold' so to speak, which are due to the reading, even by chance, of the Qur'an, for all sorts of reasons and in the most diverse situations: either received as a gift, as happened to one of the most well-known European converts, former pop singer Cat Stevens, who became Yusuf Islam, or because it was found in the prison library. Others became acquainted with Islam through books of Islamic mysticism, notably Sufism, which have attracted a wide Western readership. Other books that have influenced certain conversions are those of traditionalist authors such as René Guénon, Fritjof Schuon, and Titus Burckhardt, all of whom became Muslims.

Sufism is, however, a specific way to enter Islam, or rather a special facet of it, and leads to embracing Islam through the role of the *turuq*, not often connected to the 'Islam of the mosques'.

For many converts the background of conversion is political, both (even extreme) right and left: Islam, the religion of praxis that does not distinguish by principle between the 'city of men' and the 'city of God' but rather willingly superimposes them, seems to constitute an ideal way to 'spiritualize' a militant commitment that previously was only social or political. It is not merely by chance that we find these converts in the leadership and in the intermediate centres of the Islamic associations in Europe, in the mosques, and in promoting political initiatives such as requests to be recognized by the state. In short, they are closely in touch with the Islam of the immigrants.

Functions

A distinction can be made between the actual and potential functions of converts – with the aim of trying to understand the dynamic and evolutionary aspect of the process. One can speak of a function of cultural mediation, of linguistic translation, and of interpretation, in a broad cognitive sense. In practice, the following acquire great importance: the contribution in terms of social know-how; the pooling of a network of relationships (including the political, institutional, and religious ones), which already exist and which can be developed further; the peculiar intellectual function that is shown through the capacity to mediate and to produce culture both within the community (books and reviews, but also testimonies and sermons) and, chiefly, outside of it through the contribution made to the formation of the image of Islam (conferences, public relations, and on a larger scale the simple explanation of personal behaviours like wearing the *hijab*: as one of our interviewees stated, 'I am a walking symbol').

In a more general sense, the converts constitute (and are perceived as) a crucial element in at least three fields. They offer *legitimation* in the eyes of society: a function fulfilled especially by the intellectuals who have converted. They are present also in the academic milieu, for instance among the orientalists, and they contribute to producing the image of Islam and its contents. The converts also provide *confirmation* for the benefit of the migrant community, especially those with a weaker sense of identity: their *shahada*, when enunciated in an Islamic centre, or in publications, are a 'proof' of the superiority of Islam and a confirmation of the rightness of their faith for those immigrants who are often less integrated and less well-educated. Finally, they comprise an element of *guarantee*: a convert is a citizen – and a militant or an Islamic leader as a citizen can not be expelled, or surrendered, to this or that native Islamic country.

If that is the present situation in several European countries, in spite of significant variations of weight and importance between the one and the other (which ought to be analysed individually), the potential situation, the possible evolution of the function of the converts, is not the same. Indeed, some of the present functions served by the converts are transitory: for instance, they fill a gap in terms of leadership and cultural elaboration because of the lack of immigrants capable of doing so. However, they could be substituted by a new leadership, which may come from abroad but will more likely be produced within the second and third generations of immigrants, something that is currently happening in several European countries.

Nevertheless, the lasting importance of the converts must be emphasized, mainly in the institutional interface and in the 'power games', which are linked to the national or regional representation of Islam, particularly with respect to the host society and its institutions: a role that the passage of generation among the Muslim communities will not be able to cancel in the short term, even though one might hypothesize that the overestimation of their role in cultural and organizational leadership that is now attributed to the converts – very visible in some countries, namely those where immigration

Continued on page 26

https://archive.org/details/bk375/page/n1/mode/1up

Real Patidar Library

https://www.realpatidar.com/library

This book/literature/article/material may be used for research, teaching, and private study purposes. Any substantial or systematic reproduction, redistribution, reselling, loan, sub-licensing, systematic supply, or distribution in any form to anyone is expressly forbidden.

The library does not give any warranty express or implied or make any representation that the contents will be complete or accurate or up to date. The library shall not be liable for any loss, actions, claims, proceedings, demand, or costs or damages whatsoever or howsoever caused arising directly or indirectly in connection with or arising out of the use of this material.

Full terms and conditions of use: http://www.realpatidar.com

About Real Patidar books

Real Patidar's mission is to organize the information on Satpanth religion, which is a Nizari Ismaili sect of Shia branch of Islam, and to make it universally accessible and useful. Real Patidar Books helps readers discover the material on Satpanth online while helping authors and researchers in their studies. You can know more by visiting http://www.realpatidar.com

You can resize and move this box in any PDF Application like Adobe Acrobat Reader.

Use the Bookmarks facility in the PDF to directly go to the pages containing Highlights.

For Reference See Pages: 26.
For page numbers, see the page footer. Page numbers are in 'Page x of y' format

References by: RealPatidar.com - Created using: step2-QR-and-3-RM-v5.py

https://archive.org/details/bk375/page/n2/mode/1up

Digitally signed by realpatidar.com
DN: cn=realpatidar.com, c=IN, o=realpatidar.com, email=mail@realpatidar.com
Reason: I have reviewed this document
Date: 2026.02.18 17:32:10 +05'30'

international institute
ISIM Newsletter 11
for the study of islam in the modern world
realpatidar.com

Circulation 8,000 | December 2002 | 40 pages

postal address
P.O. Box 11089
2301 EB Leiden
The Netherlands

telephone
+31(0)71 527 79 05
fax
+31(0)71 527 79 06

e-mail
info@isim.nl
homepage
http://www.isim.nl

9
Isa Blumi
Indoctrinating Albanians: Dynamics of Islamic Aid

22
Aki Nawaz
Fun Da Mental: Radical Music, Political Protest

27
Lara Deeb
Women's Islamic Community Service in Beirut

33
Joel Beinin
Neo-Conservatives Threaten Academic Freedom

Converts and the Making of European Islam

The visibility of converts to Islam in the media has recently undergone an exponential increase – mainly in the United States. There was the case of Jonny Walker, labelled 'Jonny the Taliban', born into the wasp upper class, who was apprehended as *mujahid* in Afghanistan. Then there was Jos Padilla, the would-be terrorist who was seized in an airport loaded with explosives. Finally, John Allen Williams came on the scene. Of Jamaican ancestry, born in Louisiana, this former American soldier in the Gulf War became the serial killer that terrorized Washington in October 2002 by killing 13 people in cold blood. These three tales have nothing in common, apart from the fact that all three protagonists are converts to Islam.

STEFANO ALLIEVI

PHOTO: STR, © REUTERS 2000

Former British pop star Cat Stevens, now Yusuf Islam.

These three tales of converts to Islam also have in common that they all deeply affected the American imagery and brought about a reawakening, or even the discovery of an interest in the Islam of converts, which until recently – with few exceptions – was mainly considered to be a phenomenon limited to the black Muslims movement of Elijah Muhammad and nowadays of Louis Farrakhan (of whom John Allen had been a follower), and consequently almost thought of as an 'ethnic' oddity.

In Europe, attention paid to conversion to Islam has begun to gather momentum in the last years and has opened up to research into the role of some Sufi groups, trajectories of the feminine conversions, and the role of converts in Muslim associations. Nevertheless, literature on the matter remains rather scarce, especially when compared to that of the so-called 'new religious movements', some of which have a smaller membership compared to converts to Islam.

The highest number of conversions to Islam is brought about by a cause that has little to do with the search for spirituality, namely marriage (following the Islamic rules, a non-Muslim male cannot marry a Muslim woman without converting). Such a reason for conversion may contradict the principle of freedom of religion and of conscience as it developed in the West, but is normally lived without special problems by people who, often, are hardly religious, and are consequently little disturbed by this choice. These conversions have generally no great impact on the lives of the individuals and of the couples, and often not even on that of their offspring. As a matter of fact, conversion under these circumstances is a means to reach another aim (marriage), not an end in itself.

However, other trajectories to conversion, which, like the previous ones, can be called 'relational', even if far less numerous, are the ones that have the greatest impact: on the lives of the individuals, but also on that of the Islamic communities in Europe. In the list can be included the 'discovery' of Islam through meeting Muslim believers, while as a tourist or on a business trip to Muslim countries, or through meeting an immigrant in Europe and eventually falling in love with him or her (it is the case of several mixed couples, even when the conversion is not compulsory, as in the case of a non-Muslim woman marrying a Muslim man).

A different model of conversion is that of the 'rational' conversions. Here we can refer to the intellectual conversions, 'cold' so to speak, which are due to the reading, even by chance, of the Qur'an, for all sorts of reasons and in the most diverse situations: either received as a gift, as happened to one of the most well-known European converts, former pop singer Cat Stevens, who became Yusuf Islam, or because it was found in the prison library. Others became acquainted with Islam through books of Islamic mysticism, notably Sufism, which have attracted a wide Western readership. Other books that have influenced certain conversions are those of traditionalist authors such as René Guénon, Fritjof Schuon, and Titus Burckhardt, all of whom became Muslims.

Sufism is, however, a specific way to enter Islam, or rather a special facet of it, and leads to embracing Islam through the role of the *turuq*, not often connected to the 'Islam of the mosques'.

For many converts the background of conversion is political, both (even extreme) right and left: Islam, the religion of praxis that does not distinguish by principle between the 'city of men' and the 'city of God' but rather willingly superimposes them, seems to constitute an ideal way to 'spiritualize' a militant commitment that previously was only social or political. It is not merely by chance that we find these converts in the leadership and in the intermediate centres of the Islamic associations in Europe, in the mosques, and in promoting political initiatives such as requests to be recognized by the state. In short, they are closely in touch with the Islam of the immigrants.

Functions

A distinction can be made between the actual and potential functions of converts – with the aim of trying to understand the dynamic and evolutionary aspect of the process. One can speak of a function of cultural mediation, of linguistic translation, and of interpretation, in a broad cognitive sense. In practice, the following acquire great importance: the contribution in terms of social know-how; the pooling of a network of relationships (including the political, institutional, and religious ones), which already exist and which can be developed further; the peculiar intellectual function that is shown through the capacity to mediate and to produce culture both within the community (books and reviews, but also testimonies and sermons) and, chiefly, outside of it through the contribution made to the formation of the image of Islam (conferences, public relations, and on a larger scale the simple explanation of personal behaviours like wearing the *hijab*: as one of our interviewees stated, 'I am a walking symbol').

In a more general sense, the converts constitute (and are perceived as) a crucial element in at least three fields. They offer *legitimation* in the eyes of society: a function fulfilled especially by the intellectuals who have converted. They are present also in the academic milieu, for instance among the orientalists, and they contribute to producing the image of Islam and its contents. The converts also provide *confirmation* for the benefit of the migrant community, especially those with a weaker sense of identity: their *shahada*, when enunciated in an Islamic centre, or in publications, are a 'proof' of the superiority of Islam and a confirmation of the rightness of their faith for those immigrants who are often less integrated and less well-educated. Finally, they comprise an element of *guarantee*: a convert is a citizen – and a militant or an Islamic leader as a citizen can not be expelled, or surrendered, to this or that native Islamic country.

If that is the present situation in several European countries, in spite of significant variations of weight and importance between the one and the other (which ought to be analysed individually), the potential situation, the possible evolution of the function of the converts, is not the same. Indeed, some of the present functions served by the converts are transitory: for instance, they fill a gap in terms of leadership and cultural elaboration because of the lack of immigrants capable of doing so. However, they could be substituted by a new leadership, which may come from abroad but will more likely be produced within the second and third generations of immigrants, something that is currently happening in several European countries.

Nevertheless, the lasting importance of the converts must be emphasized, mainly in the institutional interface and in the 'power games', which are linked to the national or regional representation of Islam, particularly with respect to the host society and its institutions: a role that the passage of generation among the Muslim communities will not be able to cancel in the short term, even though one might hypothesize that the overestimation of their role in cultural and organizational leadership that is now attributed to the converts – very visible in some countries, namely those where immigration

Continued on page 26

https://archive.org/details/bk375/page/n3/mode/1up

2002-12 -The Tale of Hidden Pir -ISIM (375)

international institute
ISIM
for the study of islam
in the modern world

ISIM Newsletter 11
December 2002
40 pages
ISSN 1 388-9788

Editorial Office
Visiting Address
Rapenburg 71, Leiden
Postal Address
ISIM, P.O. Box 11089
2301 EB Leiden, The Netherlands
Telephone
+31(0)71 527 79 05
Telefax
+31(0)71 527 79 06
E-mail
isimnews@isim.nl
Homepage
www.isim.nl

Editor
Dick Douwes
Copy and language editor
Gabrielle Constant
Desk editor
Noël Lambert
Design
De Kreeft, Amsterdam
Printing
Dijkman Offset, Diemen

Coming issues
ISIM Newsletter 12
Deadline: 1 February 2003
Published: May 2003
ISIM Newsletter 13
Deadline: 1 June 2003
Published: September 2003
ISIM Newsletter 14
Deadline: 1 October 2003
Published: December 2003

The ISIM solicits your response to the ISIM Newsletter. *If you wish to contribute to the* ISIM Newsletter, *style sheets may be obtained upon request from the ISIM Secretariat or on the ISIM website. In order to offer updated information on activities concerning the study of Islam and Muslim societies, along with news on vacancies, grants, and fellowships, the ISIM relies on its readers. The information will be made available on the ISIM website.*

The ISIM Newsletter *is published by the International Institute for the Study of Islam in the Modern World (ISIM). Responsibility for the facts and opinions expressed in this publication rests solely with the authors. Their views do not necessarily reflect those of the Institute or its supporters. The* ISIM Newsletter *is free of charge.*

Staff ISIM
- Muhammad Khalid Masud
  Academic Director
- Peter van der Veer
  Co-Director
- Dick Douwes
  Academic Affairs
- Mary Bakker
  Administrative Affairs
- Mariette van Beek
  Administrative Affairs
- Nathal Dessing
  Education
- Noël Lambert
  Newsletter & Website
- Marina de Regt
  Domestic Labour Project
- Bouchra El Idrissi
  Administrative Assistant
- Ada Seffelaar
  Management Assistant
- Elger van der Avoird
  Database Assistant

Rights at Home Project
- Laila al-Zwaini
  Programme Coordinator
- Prof. Abdullahi an-Na'im
  Primary Consultant
- Prof. Nasr Abu Zaid
  Resource Person

Board
- Drs. L.E.H. Vredevoogd (Chair)
  President of Leiden University
- Dr S.J. Noorda
  President of University of Amsterdam
- Dr J.R.T.M. Peters
  Vice President of University of Nijmegen
- Drs J.G.F. Veldhuis
  President of Utrecht University

Academic Committee
- Prof. Léon Buskens (Chair)
  Utrecht University
- Prof. Mamadou Diouf
  University of Michigan, Ann Arbor
- Prof. Dale Eickelman
  Dartmouth College, Hanover, New Hampshire
- Prof. Gudrun Krämer
  Free University Berlin
- Prof. Remke Kruk
  Leiden University
- Prof. Jean-François Leguil-Bayart
  CERI, Paris
- Prof. Harald Motzki
  University of Nijmegen
- Prof. Ruud Peters
  University of Amsterdam
- Prof. Frits Staal
  University of California at Berkeley
- Sami Zubaida
  Birkbeck College, University of London

ISIM Chairs
- Prof. Muhammad Khalid Masud
  ISIM Chair, Leiden University
- Prof. Martin van Bruinessen
  ISIM Chair, Utrecht University
- Prof. Annelies Moors
  ISIM Chair, University of Amsterdam
- Prof. Abdulkader Tayob
  ISIM Chair, University of Nijmegen

realpatidar.com

Editorial

DICK DOUWES | *Editor*

Gamal Abdel Nasser meets Malcom X in Antwerp. In response to the ongoing debate on the flaws of multiculturalism and the alleged deficiencies of Islam, preventing Muslims from embracing Western modernity, some migrant activists have started a counter-campaign in Western Europe. The most outspoken representative of a young generation of activists is Dyab Abou Jahjah, who left Lebanon for Belgium in 1990 to study political science. In 2000 he founded the Arab European League, a movement that claims to have over 400 members and many more sympathizers in Belgium. Today, the movement is gaining popularity in neighbouring countries, too, and the Netherlands' branch of the League will be formally opened soon. Unlike most migrant activists and representatives, forced into a defensive position, in particular after 9/11, Abou Jahjah calls for the restoration of Arab and Muslim dignity and pride among the migrant communities. Countering apologies, self-critique, and gestures of goodwill by most migrant representatives, Abou Jahjah has taken up the cause of migrant culture and faith demanding the acknowledgement and reproduction of cultural diversity. He equates integration with assimilation and therefore rejects it. He is severely opposed to the Belgian political establishment, accusing it of curbing Muslim inhabitants' civil rights and portraying Islam as a criminal belief. Antwerp's white right-wing Flemish Bloc party, being part of that establishment, constitutes his main antagonist. But given that mainstream political parties in Europe increasingly adopt right-wing issues and that the media are eager to cover any signal of Muslim maladjustment, the non-conformist Abou Jahjah is now empowered to provoke angry responses from among the nation's lite and that of its neighbours.

Abou Jahjah's fame is of very recent date. He first became known when the League was among the initiators of a complaint filed against Ariel Sharon and others for their responsibility in the massacres of Sabra and Shatila in 1976. The complaint was lodged with the Belgian Public Prosecutor's Office in June 2001 following the recognition of the principle of the exercise of universal jurisdiction by a Belgian court in a case against four Rwandan nationals for war crimes earlier in the same month. The case was dismissed last June, but by then Abou Jahjah had proven his talent for holding the limelight; in a series of incidents and interviews within one year's time he evolved from a pro-Palestinian activist to a spokesperson of a disgruntled Muslim youth. In November he was arrested after riots in an Antwerp suburb following the murder of a Belgian citizen of Moroccan origin by a next-door (white) neighbour. Antwerp police accused Abou Jahjah of having incited Moroccan youth to rampage the neighbourhood and the Belgian Prime Minister branded the League as a criminal organization, also because it had taken up patrolling the streets of Antwerp in order to tape possible ill-treatment of migrant youth by the police. High-ranking politicians in the Netherlands, including some ministers, joined the parade and vowed that they would do their utmost to prohibit the League from spreading to their country. In the meantime, lack of proof compelled the Belgian authorities to release the culprit after a few days: a migrant hero was born. However, many – also among the migrant communities – argue that Abou Jahjah is detrimental to the cause of these communities and that he represents no-one but himself. But in the 'soap opera' that migrant and identity politics in Western Europe has become, Abou Jahjah needs little effort to find his niche. His good looks, flamboyant style, and fluency in Dutch are well received among Moroccan youth and make him an attractive media personality. Some of his language comes close to that of hip hop and other modern music cultures (see Khedimallah, pp. 20–1, and Nawaz, p. 22).

In his political thinking Abou Jahjah combines Abdel Nasser's call for an Arab renaissance with Malcom X's demand for respect and justice for oppressed minorities, embracing the latter's appeal to seize these rights and not to wait patiently until they are granted (www.arabeuropean.org).

Abou Jahjah's shift from Nasserite Arab activism to migrant spokesmanship points to the emancipation of youth of Muslim background who are, unlike their parents, well versed in European languages and cultures, but who react against growing pressures to distance themselves from their heritage. Interestingly, they construe Islam as a cultural rather than religious and societal system, albeit that some Islamic notions are used to appropriate and authenticate notions such as democracy.

Ostensibly in contrast is the Somalian-born Ayaan Hirsi Ali, who came into the spotlight by publicly declaring that she no longer considers herself a Muslim, principally because of the inferior status of Muslim women who are, in her view, lowered to son-bearing machinery. Her step was no doubt a brave one, but the way in which she was readily adopted by the main conservative party in the Netherlands and offered a seat in parliament, indicates that her situation is not totally different from that Abou Jahjah: their individual careers largely depend on the agitated state of public debate and rapidly changing political moods. The processes of inclusion and exclusion dominate the political field and various notions of being Muslim or being Western, or both, compete. In the 1990s the position of Muslims living as minorities in the West and elsewhere came under discussion among *shari'a*-oriented thinkers (see Masud, p. 17). This discussion poses daunting challenges to Islamic legal reasoning, which is founded on the assumption that Muslims are (or will or should be) a majority population. Minorities and majorities, dominating cultures and minor cultures – new vocabularies and frames of reference are in the making.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Professor Henry Munson has made some thoughtful and important contributions to the study of politics in the Islamic world. Unfortunately, his latest contribution descends into a facile and false dichotomy between Daniel Pipes and John Esposito. Daniel Pipes, Martin Kramer, et al have become notorious for espousing the most militant and extreme views of Jabotinskyite ultra-nationalism. In the case of Pipes, this has led to blatantly racist diatribes in publications like the *National Review*, where he complained of a Muslim 'invasion' of the West. In his latest book, he accuses American Muslims of a nefarious plot to take over the US government and national institutions in order to establish an 'Islamic state' in the US. Esposito has never indulged in such sweeping and inane bigotry against any group and it is frankly insulting to counterpose him with someone like Pipes.

It is disturbing to see that Munson has partially incorporated some of the ideologically driven claims of Likudniks like Pipes and Kramer. This is a broader transparently orchestrated campaign to discredit academics who might stand in the way of the current hate campaign against Muslims being conducted in the neo-conservative-evangelical mass media owned by the likes of Rupert Murdoch and Conrad Black. This has included attempts by Kramer, a scholar based in a right-wing Israeli think-tank, to testify before Congress that American scholars who do not share a foreign Likudnik agenda should have their funding cut. It is ironic that Kramer in his latest monograph claims that the field of Middle Eastern Studies has failed because it did not predict the 9/11 attacks. A colleague of mine, Mujeeb R. Khan, was with Kramer at the University of Chicago during Operation Desert Storm. While Khan explicitly warned in lectures (and subsequent articles) that massive US-led destruction in the Islamic world would inevitably lead to radicalization and devastating attacks upon America, Kramer, both at the time and subsequently, discounted the danger for the US of following a neo-conservative agenda of destructive interventionism in the Islamic world. John Esposito has also long warned that the failure of the United States to support democratization and equitable socio-economic development in the Islamic world would also lead to extreme radicalization and nihilistic violence as represented by al-Qa'ida, Gamaat Islamiya, and the AIG of Algeria. It is instructive that most scholars of Egypt, Afghanistan, and Algeria note how brutal repression of efforts at democratic reform directly led to the spawning of such extremist groups and the marginalization of moderate voices. It is also instructive that both Pipes and Kramer in their journal *Middle East Quarterly* have repeatedly warned against promoting democracy and human rights in the Muslim world because insufficiently pliant regimes would be elected.

Finally, I remain disturbed that Munson failed in his scholarly duty to carefully read Esposito's oeuvre, which is considered by a great many scholars of Muslim politics to be at the forefront in its prescience and analysis. Esposito in his earlier work and latest book *Unholy Wars* has repeatedly pointed to the danger of intolerant and extremist radicals. More importantly, he has pointed out that such militancy is a direct result of brutal tyrannies that forestall the possibility of gradual and pluralistic reform. Esposito's path-breaking work is now more important than ever. If we are to forestall murderous and unwinnable 'clashes of civilization' involving billions of people around the globe, it is vital that mainstream reformist and democratically inclined Muslim thinkers and movements – which have always existed and to which Munson seems suddenly oblivious – in Indonesia, Malaysia, Pakistan, Uzbekistan, Turkey, Egypt, Tunisia, and Morocco be engaged by Western scholars and institutions. This sort of scholarly engagement was pioneered by John Esposito and it offers humanity the only course for escaping horrific cycles of violence along racial, religious, ethnic, or ideological divisions.

M. HAKAN YAVUZ

M. Hakan Yavuz is assistant professor of Political Science at the University of Utah, USA.
E-mail: hakan.yavuz@poli-sci.utah.edu

realpatidar.com

RETRACTION

An error was made in *ISIM Newsletter* 10, which we would like to hereby rectify. On page 19, in Dr Farian Sabahi's article 'The Literacy Corps in Pahlavi Iran (1963–1979)', the author was referred to as 'He', but should have been 'She' in the following: 'She is author of *TheLiteracy Corps in Pahlavi Iran (1963–1979): Political, Social and Literary Implications*'. We apologize for this oversight.

https://archive.org/details/bk375/page/n4/mode/1up

2002-12 -The Tale of Hidden Pir -ISIM (375)

Workshop Report

ANNELIES MOORS

Scholarship and Activism in Islamic Family Law

From 5 to 7 July 2002 a workshop on 'Scholarship and Activism in Islamic Family Law' was held at the Freie Universit t Berlin, organized jointly by the Interdisciplinary Centre 'Social and Cultural History of the Middle East' at the Freie Universit t Berlin (Katja Niethammer, Anna W rth), the AKMI (Arbeitskreis Moderne und Islam at the Wissenschaftkolleg Berlin, Georges Khalil), CIMEL (Centre of Islamic and Middle Eastern Law at SOAS, London, Lynn Welchman) and ISIM (Annelies Moors).

This meeting was the third in a series. The first workshop, convened by Anna Würth and Jamila Bargach and held in Berlin (June 2000), set out to create a network of scholars employing social science perspectives and methodologies in the study of family law. The second workshop, organized by Abdullahi an-Na'im and Laila al-Zwaini (ISIM, 'Rights-at-Home') at the annual European Institute Meeting in Florence (March 2001), discussed concepts of family, state, and civil society in Muslim societies. Legal and sociological perspectives were employed in order to discuss such issues as debates on family law reform in the 1990s and relations between family law and human rights issues. This third workshop focused on 'Scholarship and Activism' within the framework of a comparative and historical approach. Three main issues were highlighted: the production of knowledge about Islamic family law; processes of codification and the nation-state; and activism, civil society, and the public sphere.

Discussing the production of knowledge about Islamic family law brought to the fore the urgency of developing a reflexive stance on the power/knowledge nexus in different local and historical settings. Tracing the histories of scholarship in the field of Islamic family law asks for investigating the ways in which research dealing with Islamic family law has been organized and institutionalized. It raises questions about the politics involved, be it in terms of colonial powers controlling their colonial subjects or present-day states trying to get a grip on minorities defined as Muslim. This also includes the programmes set up in Western academia for Muslim students dealing with such topics as family law.

Processes of codification are central to an understanding of contemporary debates on Islamic family law. In order to investigate the various historical trajectories of such processes these need to be linked to the formation of nation-states. More detailed investigations of processes of codification point to the diversity in positions held by religious functionaries and state institutions, and argue against seeing either the state or religious authorities as a monolithic bloc. Researching the local specificities of processes of codification and the participants involved brings to the fore the relations and tensions between increased state control, a potentially flexible legal system and issues of accountability, in particular regarding their effects on the more vulnerable members of society.

Both the production of knowledge about family law and processes of codification intersect with the third main issue of debate, that is the various forms of activism related to family law, and the ways in which these relate to associational forms that are part of civil society and the more informal networks operating in the public sphere. Particular attention is not only to be paid to the agendas of activists and the ways in which they interact with their publics (or not), but also to their frames of reference, such as local traditions and customs, international human rights law, Islamic legal traditions, and insights from the social sciences. Finally, all three topics require paying attention to transnational forms of cooperation and influencing that have become increasingly important both in the production of knowledge, in processes of codification, and amongst activists.

Presentations were given by Gamal Abd an-Nasser, Jamila Bargach, Nathalie Bernard-Maugiron, Léon Buskens, Bettina Dennerlein, Ivesa Lübben, Annelies Moors, Tazeen Murshid, Dorothea Schulz, Lynn Welchman, Inken Wiese, and Anna Würth.

A co-authored publication by the network outlining the discussions and major themes is planned for 2003.

ANNUAL LECTURE

A Naqshbandi T l maque

PHOTO: WIM VREEBURG, 2002

Şerif Mardin delivering his lecture.

On 13 November 2002 Professor Şerif Mardin (Sabanci University, Istanbul) delivered the fourth ISIM Annual Lecture at the University of Nijmegen. His lecture focused on the impact of *Les aventures de Télémaque, fils d'Ulysse* by the 18th-century French author Fénélon on 19th-century Ottoman intellectuals, in particular in Khalidi-Naqshbandi circles in Istanbul.

Şerif Mardin is the author of path-breaking studies on Turkish intellectual and social history, including *The Genesis of Young Ottoman Thought* (1962) and *Religion and Social Change in Turkey* (1989). His lecture will be published in the ISIM Papers Series.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Vacancy

ISIM Academic Director

The ISIM invites applications for the position of Academic Director, who is also simultaneously the holder of the ISIM Chair of Islamic Studies in the modern period at Leiden University. The Academic Director is responsible for the overall guidance and planning of the Institute's research programmes, the Ph.D. degree and post-doctoral programmes, and international cooperation, including exchange programmes and academic meetings, all conducted in association with the ISIM Chairs at the other ISIM participating universities. As holder of the ISIM Chair at Leiden University the candidate will be expected to teach and supervise undergraduate and graduate students. In administrative affairs the Academic Director is assisted by the Executive Director, who is also in charge of the publications and outreach.

Candidates should possess an established international reputation in the study of modern Islam and Muslim societies, wide-ranging academic contacts, expertise in the field of academic management, and excellent communicative skills.

This Directorship/Professorship is a full-time position, preferably commencing in September 2003. The salary will be commensurate to the candidate's background and qualifications. Female candidates are especially encouraged to apply.

Applicants may wish to consult the ISIM website (www.isim.nl) as well as that of Leiden University (www.leiden.edu).

Review of applications will begin on 15 January 2003.
Applicants should send a full CV, including a list of publications to:
ISIM Search Committee
P.O. Box 11089
2301 EB Leiden
The Netherlands

For further inquiries, please contact:
Prof. Dr Peter van der Veer,
Chair of the Search Committee
E-mail: vanderveer@pscw.uva.nl

Summer Academy

Islam in Public Life in Pluralist Societies

In cooperation with the University of Cape Town the ISIM is organizing a Summer Academy in Cape Town in Autumn 2003 on 'Islam in Public Life in Pluralist Societies'. The Academy will invite experts and students (Ph.D. and post-doctoral) to examine the ways in which Muslims engage in the public sphere through five subthemes: secularization, law, state, media, and consumption. *Secularization* will be sub-theme through which the general changes in Muslim societies can be examined. A comparative examination of Muslim societies will provide a key to understanding the transformation of social and political practices based on Islam. *Law* is pervasive in Muslim societies as a personal code to judicial practice. It is the one common medium to comprehend the preconceptions and expectations of Muslims. Although the *state* seems to sometimes disappear in the new form of globalization, it continues to have far-reaching power and significance. Islam and public life is not restricted to state systems, but the modern nation-state cannot be ignored. The *media* in all forms plays an important role in modern global societies. The employment of new media in religion provides new possibilities and transformations for Islam in public life in both local and global contexts. Finally, *consumption* defines an often neglected dimension of contemporary public life. Consumption patterns in Muslim contexts may indicate much more than philosophical and political treaties about Islam.

More information the Summer Academy and how to apply will be made available in on the ISIM website in the second half of January 2003.

Link: http://www.realpatidar.com/library
email: mail@realpatidar.com

https://archive.org/details/bk375/page/n5/mode/1up

2002-12 -The Tale of Hidden Pir -ISIM (375)

Report

LAILA AL-ZWAINI

Rights at Home
Tanzania Sounding Boards

The ISIM programme 'Rights at Home: An Approach to the Internalization of Human Rights in Family Relations in Islamic Communities' held its second series of Sounding Board Meetings in Tanzania from 19 until 23 June 2002. The venue was in Dar es Salaam from 19 to 20 June, and on the island of Zanzibar from 22 to 23 June. The meetings were organized together with the NGO Sahiba Sisters Foundation in Dar es Salaam, a Muslim women's network to promote a positive role of Muslim women in Tanzanian society.

PHOTO: SALMA MAOULIDI, 2002

Pupils at Madrasat al-Nour, Zanzibar.

Sahiba Sisters was represented at the Sounding Board Meetings by its executive director, Salma Maoulidi, and several young staff members. The two permanent members of the project team of Rights at Home, Abdullahi An-Na'im (Emory University, Atlanta, and Visiting Professor ISIM) and Laila al-Zwaini (Programme Coordinator), were this time accompanied by Farish Noor, a young Malaysian scholar and fervent human rights activist, at the time also an ISIM Visiting Fellow. The Zanzibar meetings were co-organized by Saleh Mreh Salim from Mreh Tours and Safaris. Involving an organization of this particular kind draws attention to the lack of connections between the women's organizations on the mainland and on Zanzibar, which in its turn is dictated by the still current political distance between the two formerly separate territories, an issue that was to come up repeatedly during the discussions.

The concept of the meetings, similar to the first Sounding Board Meetings in Yemen (see *ISIM Newsletter* 10, p. 4), was to bring together representatives from different regions, gender, and professional and personal backgrounds, such as human rights activists, scholars, ulama, social welfare officers, teachers, lawyers, childrens' rights advocates, and others in order to discuss themes related to 'Rights at Home' from different perspectives, and jointly explore strategies and activities to promote autonomy for women and socialization of children.

Each session started with a short presentation by one of the local participants, followed by a general discussion in which the group focused on identifying priority issues, strategies, and actors. Presentations were held on women's emotional and reproductive health, family law legislation and debates, the application of Islamic principles in court, Islamic and cultural practices, and street children. Also, participants addressed some concrete domestic violations, and examined attempted strategies for relief.

The often frank discussions eventually narrowed down to two main concerns: the difficulties that the Muslim community in Tanzania faces as a minority group (e.g. in acquiring emission time in the public media and the creation and operation of Islamic schools), as well as the lack of, but strong desire for, an adequate programme for Islamic education in its broadest sense.

In addition to the meetings, the project team visited several NGOs and other grassroots organizations in Mwanza, a large city on the southern shore of Lake Victoria, to gain more realistic insight into their activities and difficulties. The non-religious NGO Kivulini ('In the Shade'), for instance, deals specifically with the issue of domestic violence and has developed a model for cooperation with street leaders, community officers, and Islamic authorities to find redress in cases of domestic abuse. Its experience shows that the Muslim community and the Islamic authorities in Mwanza (as in other localities) often do not react and even turn their backs on female victims of domestic violence. The woman then faces the dilemma of standing up against her husband at the cost of being expelled from her own community, or suffering the abuses in silence.

Another (Islamic) NGO in Mwanza, Tawfiq Islamic Women Organisation, aims at the creation and support of Islamic institutions, such as schools, hospitals, and orphanages. Their work is mostly voluntary, and their main concern is the lack of support from the Tanzanian government. Their present teaching material and methods are mainly inspired and provided by Wahhabi organizations. Historically, Tanzanian Muslims predominantly belong to the Shafi'i *madhhab*, with also flocks of Hanafis, Ismailis, Ibadis, and Bohras. An example of a madrasa that is exercising its own best efforts to compile a school curriculum with a specific view to the local Muslim culture, is the very lively Madrasat al-Nour on Zanzibar, which offers education up to the intermediate level. Interestingly, this school was created in 1967 by a Yemeni from the Hadramawt, underscoring the existing connections between Muslim communities around the Indian Ocean.

In its next phase, 'Rights at Home' will establish closer cooperation with several local partners to jointly engage in developing and implementing activities as proposed during our visit, such as pre-marriage education for youths; an education programme for women on their basic human rights in Islam and within their society; the drafting and effectuation of a model marriage contract that specifies rights and obligations for both spouses (e.g. an HIV/AIDS test, maintenance); sensitization meetings for area leaders, sheikhs (Islamic scholars), and *qadi*s (Islamic judges); and the establishment of a network of Muslim groups to promote human rights.

The third series of 'Rights at Home' Sounding Board Meetings will be held from 15 to 17 January 2003 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, and will bring together participants from several countries of the Southeast Asian region.

DEBATE SERIES

Islam, Authority, and Leadership

Four meetings, following the first, have taken place within the ISIM and Felix Meritis lecture and debate series 'Islam, Authority, and Leadership' in recent months. The venue was Felix Meritis, European Centre for Arts and Sciences, Amsterdam. The themes and speakers of these meetings were the following:

- 'Would the Muslim Intellectual Please Stand Up!', 20 June 2002
  Speakers: Nathal Dessing (ISIM), Haci Karacaer (Director, Milli Görüş, the Netherlands), Saoud Khadje (Dar al-Ilm, Institute for Islam Studies), and Fouad Laroui (researcher and writer).
  Moderator: Ab Cherribi.
- 'A Lonely Planet Guide for Muslims', 19 September 2002
  Speakers: Tariq Ramadan (College of Geneva and Fribourg University, Switzerland) and Abdulkader Tayob (ISIM Chair, University of Nijmegen).
  Moderator: Peter van der Veer (ISIM Co-Director).
- 'Your Constitution is Not Mine!', 10 October 2002
  Speakers: Famile Arslan (lawyer), Sadik Harchaoui (public prosecutor), and Marc Hertogh (Associate Professor of socio-legal studies, University of Tilburg).
  Moderator: Steve Austen (cultural entrepreneur, publicist, and consultant).
  See also Sadik Harchaoui's article in this *Newsletter*, p. 12.
- 'The Rib of the Man', 7 November 2002
  Speakers: Gijs von der Fuhr (Amsterdam Centre for Foreigners), Seyma Halici (Women's group, Milli Görüş), and Fenna Ulichki (Moroccan Women's Association in the Netherlands).
  Moderator: Steve Austen (cultural entrepreneur, publicist, and consultant).

The concluding meeting of the series will be held on Monday, 27 January 2003. A report of these five meetings will be published in ISIM Newsletter *12.*

CONFERENCE

ISIM at WOCMES

The First World Congress for Middle Eastern Studies (WOCMES) took place in Mainz (Germany) from 8 to 13 September 2002. The conference was held jointly by the European Association for Middle Eastern Studies (EURAMES), the Association Française pour l'Etude du Monde Arabe et Musulman (AFEMAM), the British Society for Middle East Studies (BRISMES), the German Middle East Studies Association (DAVO), and the Italian Società por gli Studi sul Medio Oriente (SeSaMO).

The ISIM co-organized two panels at WOCMES. Annelies Moors (ISIM) and Blandine Destremeau (CNRS/IEDES – University Paris I) organized a session on 'Migrant Domestic Workers to/in/from the Middle East'. This panel presented the ISIM research project 'Cultural Politics of Migrant Domestic Labour' to an audience working on the Middle East, and engaged in discussion with researchers recently working on migrant domestic labour. Apart from an outline of the project by Moors, Destremeau discussed the emergence of a domestic labour market in Yemen; Amira Ahmed (American University, Cairo) presented her research on domestic work as a survival strategy amongst refugee women in Cairo; and Joy Borkholder (The Protection Project, Johns Hopkins University) together with Mohamed Matar spoke on domestic service as a form of trafficking of persons in the Middle East. The session launched a network on migrant domestic labour in the Middle East. Those interested in joining this network under construction may contact Annelies Moors (moors@pscw.uva.nl).

In cooperation with Amr Hamzawy (Free University of Berlin) and Roel Meier (International Institute of Social History, IISH), Dick Douwes (ISIM) organized the panel 'Taking Islamist Debates and Discourses Seriously: New Avenues in Research and Collection'. This panel aimed to broaden the scope of critical discussion on contemporary discursive and programmatic changes in the Islamist spectrum. It also introduced a new joint initiative of Egyptian and European research centres aimed at collecting and analysing contemporary publications (including pamphlets, grey literature, tapes, and websites) of Islamist movements with respect to controversies on: democracy and civil society, implementation of the *shari'a*, issues of social welfare, and authenticity and cultural identity. Amr Hamzawy introduced the initiative. The panel included papers by Gamal Sultan (al-Manar al-Jadeed), 'Critique and Self-Critique in Egypt's Islamist Movements'; Dina al-Khawaga (Cairo University), 'New Spaces, New Languages: The Islamist Discourse on the TV-Channel Iqra'; and Roel Meijer (IISH), 'The Role of IISH in Collecting and Preserving the Heritage of Islamist Movements'.

Karin van Nieuwkerk (ISIM post-doctoral fellow) presented a paper on 'Female Converts to Islam: A Comparison of Online and Offline Conversion Narratives' in the panel 'Women and Modernity'.

realpatidar.com

https://archive.org/details/bk375/page/n6/mode/1up

2002-12 -The Tale of Hidden Pir -ISIM (375)

Turkey

MARTIN RIEXINGER

The Islamic Creationism of Harun Yahya

For some time Islamic publishing in the West has been associated with pamphlets in awkward English printed on pulp. Strolling through Islamic bookshops in Britain one immediately realizes how things have changed: beautifully edited books are offered for considerable prices. A notable part of these publications is dedicated to the defence of Islam against the challenges of Christianity and materialism. Outstanding examples for this new tendency are the writings of the prolific Turkish author Harun Yahya (pseudonym of Adnan Oktar), whose list of Turkish publications includes about 180 titles, most of them dedicated to the refutation of Darwinism.

The bulk of the publications by Harun Yahya just reiterates – adorned with beautiful illustrations – the basic claims proposed in his most popular work *Evrim teorisinin çöküşü* (The Evolution Deceit) with detailed reference to certain phenomena. The religious response to the theory of evolution – as well as modern science in general – has been seriously neglected by Islamic studies. The few research works that deal with the topic concern the acceptance of the concept of evolution by secular-minded intellectuals like Isma'il Mazhar,[1] whereas his opposition in Islamist circles has almost passed unnoticed,[2] although from early on Islamist thinkers like Mawdudi stressed the contradiction between random selection and the design of nature by God; and they denounced the harmful effects of the theory of evolution on society.

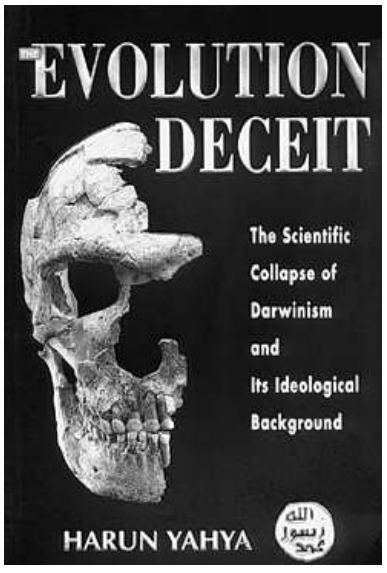
Scientific creationism

However, it was not before the 1980s that the refutation of evolutionism became a major issue in the Islamic world. This happened in the most Westernized and secularized country of the Islamic world: Turkey. Under military and later Motherland Party (ANAP) rule evolution was not only condemned in 'religion and ethics' lessons but was even deleted from the biology curriculum. This occurred when a quietist version of Islam was supposed to legitimize military rule and deligitimize 'leftist materialism' by promoting 'spiritual values'. In this period the writings of a new generation of American Protestant fundamentalists were translated into Turkish. Authors like Duane Gish and John Morris claim that their 'scientific creationism' is not only based on scriptural but also on scientific evidence. Harun Yahya's far from original refutation of the theory of evolution is based on the latters' main assertions:

- Chance cannot explain the formation of proteins let alone the complex composition of cells whereas a conscious creator can.
- The perfect adaptation of all living creatures shows that they are products of 'intelligent design'.
- Evolutionists have not been not able to present 'missing links' between species let alone higher taxa. The examples proposed up to now were forgeries.

This connection with Christian 'scientific creationism' notwithstanding, Harun Yahya kept certain subjects, which expose the latter to ridicule in scientific circles, out of his works. Unlike those who promote 'Flood geology' or struggle to find evidence for the existence of pterosaurs in historical times, Harun Yahya never questions that the earth is hundreds of million years old and that a wide range of animals and plants have become extinct. In his popular book *Kavimler'in helâkı*, which claims to present archaeological evidence for the reports on the prophets in the Qur'an, he describes the Flood as an event that did not affect the whole globe but only Mesopotamia. Finding archaeological evidence for the prophetical stories in the Qur'an is another popular subject in Islamist circles. This is most probably due to the influence of Mawdudi, whose *Tafhim ul-Qur'an* is referred to by Harun Yahya.[3] Other main sources are popular magazines and Werner Keller's *Und die Bibel hat doch recht*.

In view of the deep impact of Protestant creationism it is not surprising that the same flaws characterize the writings of Harun Yahya. He takes arguments of biologists over the details of evolution out of their context and presents them as refutations of evolution as such. He also puts forth unfounded claims like the one that australopitheci had prehensile feet like chimps and not feet like men, enabling them to walk upright.[4]



The dangers of materialism

Although Harun Yahya takes great efforts to endow his writings with a scientific veneer, he frankly states that biology is not his real concern. His commitment to refute the theory of evolution was fostered when he, as a student at the Mimar Sinan Üniversitesi's arts faculty, saw that many of his class fellows succumbed to materialist philosophies and abandoned Islam.[5] He concluded that Darwinism was 'the underpinning of a dishonest philosophy, … materialism', and hence the base for all ideologies and political movements threatening Turkey (Yahya 1999b:1). According to him differentiating between the theory of evolution and social Darwinism is futile. Darwin's actual denunciation of slavery notwithstanding, Harun Yahya alleges that his only intention was to legitimize colonialism and slavery. The praise for Darwin by fascists and peripheral anti-Turkish remarks in his private correspondence enable Harun Yahya to hold him responsible for the assassination of Turkish immigrants by German neo-nazis in the 1990s (Yahya 1999a:40ff., 68ff.). The importance Marxists attach to Darwinism as a fellow materialist ideology lets Harun Yahya draw a direct line between Darwin and the separatist Kurdish Workers Party, PKK (Yahya 1999a:76ff.). As alternative to the materialist ideologies he proposes an extremist variant of idealism that denies the existence of the material world altogether. The only thing that exists is the soul in which God creates sense perceptions. This immaterial soul cannot be explained with reference to atoms and molecules. Harun Yahya bolsters his claim not only with reference to famous Sufis but also by invoking Berkeley and Wittgenstein (Yahya 1999b:174ff.). Although Harun Yahya's primary motivation is political and obviously anti-secularist, he refrains from openly challenging Kemalism. He published pamphlets that portray Atatürk as a devout believer who must be defended against the claim of the materialists that he was one of them (Yahya 2002).

Harun Yahya's worldview is conspirative. For the success of Darwinism he holds responsible a mafia that controls scientific institutions and journals as well as popular magazines like *National Geographic* and *The Scientific American*. In the writings considered here he does not, however, suggest a connection between his attacks against Darwinism and his second most important issue, Freemason and Templar conspiracies (Yahya 2000b). Unlike other recent Islamist conspirators he does not vilify Jews in general. He describes Zionism as a result of a complot by the Freemasons. Nevertheless Harun Yahya propagates the theses of Holocaust deniers such as the German neo-nazi Leuchter, which casts doubt of the seriousness of his attacks on nazism in his anti-evolutionist writings (Yahya n.d.:77ff.).

Institutionalization at home, reputation abroad

Harun Yahya has institutionalized his campaign in the Bilim Araştırma Vakfı (Science Research Endowment), which in 1998 began to hold major conferences in Turkish cities to which leading 'scientific creationists' from America were invited. Secular-minded scientists, who for some time did not take the creationist challenge seriously, reacted with the formation of the Türk Evrim Kurulu (Turkish Evolution Association) that advocates the teaching of evolution in schools and organizes counter-campaigns.[6] Nevertheless Harun Yahya's theses made inroads into the political mainstream. In 2001 an ANAP deputy demanded censorship of foreign television stations that propagated the theory of evolution.[7] The Bilim Araştırma Vakfı attracted the suspicion of state authorities in late 1999, but the allegations, including sexual abuse, proved to be invalid. However, Harun Yahya's slander campaign against secular-minded professors of science in 1999 led to a lawsuit that resulted in hefty fines.[8]

Harun Yahya's works have been translated into several languages including Arabic, Spanish, Russian, Serbo-Croat, Urdu, Malay, and German. In September/October 2001 three lecturing tours abroad were scheduled, to the US, Indonesia, and to the British Isles. The conferences are generally hosted by Muslim student associations. His articles appear on many Islamic homepages kept by organizations or individuals. His international reputation is due to the extensive use of the internet. He may thus be considered the first Islamic intellectual who has based his career on the use of this most up-to-date technology. His writings show that Islamism has a religious aspect that many studies focusing on political strategies neglect. In this respect this ideology is more closely related to its Protestant fundamentalist counterpart than has been generally acknowledged hitherto.

Notes

1. Najm A. Bezirgan, 'The Islamic World', in Thomas F. Glick (ed.), *The Comparative Reception of Darwinism* (Austin, 1974), 375–87; Adel A. Ziadat, *Western Science in the Arab World: The Impact of Darwinism, 1860–1930* (Houndsmills, 1986).
2. Among the few authors dealing with this subject are: Pervez, *Islam and Science: Religious Orthodoxy and the Battle for Rationality* (London, 1991); Klaus-Peter Ohly, 'Evolution und Islam – Islamisierung der Wissenschaften', in Eve-Marie Engels, et al (eds), *Ethik der Biowissenschaften: Geschichte und Theorie* (Beiträge zur 6, Jahrestagung der DGGTB in Tübingen 1997, Berlin 1998), 353–9; Aykut Kence and Ümit Sayın, 'Islamic Scientific Creationism: A New Challenge in Turkey', *NCSE Reports* (1999) 19:6; Taner Edis, 'Cloning Creationism in Turkey', *NCSE Reports* (1999) 19:6.
3. Sayyid Abu l-A'la Mawdudi, 'Darwin ka nazariya-i irtiqa', in *Tafhimat*, vol. ii, 19th ed., (Lahore, 1998), 277–84.
4. I am grateful to Klaus-Peter Ohly, University of Bielefeld, for giving me access to a list he has compiled for a forthcoming publication.
5. http://www.harunyahya.org/yazar_hakkinda.htm
6. http://www.geocities.com/evrimkurami/kampanya.html; also Edis (1999) and Kence and Sayın (1999), see note 2 for full references.
7. *Hürriyet*, 29 April 2001.
8. http://www.geocities.com/evrimkurami/basin/gerkarar.html

References

- *Yahya, Harun. n.d.* Soykırım yalanı. *Istanbul.*
- ———. *1999a.* Darwin'inTürkdüşmanlığı. Evrim teorisinin kökeyüzü. *Istanbul.*
- ———. *1999b.* The Evolution Deceit. The Scientific Collapse of Darwinism. *London.*
- ———. *2000a.* Kavimlerinhelâkı. *5th ed. Istanbul.*
- ———. *2000b.* Yeni Masonik Düzen. *3rd ed. Istanbul.*
- ———. *2002.* Atatürk'ü iyi anlamak. *Istanbul.*

Dr Martin Riexinger is currently conducting research on the religious response to modern science in Islam at the University of Freiburg im Breisgau, Germany. E-mail: martin.riexinger@orient.uni-freiburg.de

Link: http://www.realpatidar.com/library
email: mail@realpatidar.com

https://archive.org/details/bk375/page/n7/mode/1up

2002-12 -The Tale of Hidden Pir -ISIM (375)

East Africa

ARYE ODED

Islam and Politics in Kenya

Since independence there is widespread grievance among Kenyan Muslims who feel that the mainly Christian regime treats them as second-class citizens and discriminates against them economically and politically. The government, for its part, has fears that the influence of some foreign and local radical Muslims could disrupt peace and security in Kenya. The 1992–1994 Muslim disturbances along the coast, the twin bombings of the US embassies in Nairobi and Dar-es-Salaam in 1998, and the recent bombing of a tourist hotel in Mombasa for which al-Qa^cida has claimed responsibility intensify these fears. Nevertheless the vast majority of Kenyan Muslims are moderate, reject violent extremism, and work to achieve equal rights by peaceful means.

Kenya's six million Muslims form a significant minority, representing 20 per cent of the population. Their large number, combined with the fact that most of them are concentrated in economically and strategically important areas, gives the Muslims, at least potentially, considerable political weight. On the coastal strip and in the towns there, such as Mombasa, Malindi, and Lamu, Muslims account for more than 50 per cent of the population. On this strip live the Swahilis (all of whom are Muslims), Arabs, and people from various African ethnic groups that have adopted Islam. Another important group of Muslims in Kenya are the Somalis, who live in the Northeastern Province. Their number is estimated at about 600,000. There are also considerable numbers of Muslims in the large towns, including Nairobi. Among Kenya's Muslims there are various groups and denominations. Due to the fact that Islamic penetration into the area came primarily from Hadramaut, to the south of the Arabian Peninsula, and was spread by Sunni Shafi^ci shaikhs, the great majority of Kenya's Muslims are Sunni of the Shafi^ci school.

The Kenyan government, like the governments of Uganda, Tanzania, and most African countries, prohibits the formation of political parties based on religion. Therefore, religious leaders – Muslim and Christian alike – set up 'religious' or 'social' organizations through which they can express their views. Since independence, many such Muslim organizations have come and gone. Some of them were regional or sectional, others nationwide. They are supposed to deal with educational, religious, and social matters. Nevertheless, these organizations have frequently become involved in political concerns. The authorities in Kenya, like those in Uganda and Tanzania, have themselves established Muslim umbrella organizations and worked through them to obtain Muslim support and to influence and supervise their activities. Many of the key positions in these organizations are occupied by Muslims who support the government, among them assistant ministers and senior government or ruling-party officials. The main Muslim umbrella organization is the Supreme Council of Kenya Muslims (SUPKEM).

Since independence, the authorities have seen to it that Muslims are represented in the government – in the ruling party and in public institutions. Muslims have generally been represented in government by two or three assistant ministers who are loyal to the regime, out of a total of forty to fifty ministers and assistant ministers. The Muslim assistant ministers generally come from a very small circle. When President Moi came to power in 1978, Muslims were generally better represented and, for the first time, two Muslim ministers were appointed. Furthermore, in 1982, a Somali Muslim Chief of Staff was appointed. After the 1997 elections, there were 30 Muslim MPs out of 210 MPs (14.2 per cent).

There have been other concessions that the government has made since independence to gain Muslim support, especially in periods of municipal, parliamentary, and presidential elections, when the political importance of the Muslims is especially noticeable. Among these concessions were: making the Muslim festival of Id al-Fitr a national public holiday in Kenya; enshrining the position of chief *qadi* in the constitution (the chief *qadi* is the highest Muslim religious official in Kenya and he serves as the government's adviser in all matters pertaining to Muslims); deciding on issues connected to inheritance, marriage, divorce, and *waqf* (endowment set aside for religious purposes) in the *shari^ca* courts by *qadi*s appointed by the chief *qadi*; and taking into account Muslim values and practices in areas such as animal slaughter, autopsies, dress, and identity cards.

Mutual suspicions

Muslim aspirations were not, however, fully satisfied, nor were their many complaints about discrimination silenced. Muslim discontent was particularly evident on the eve of the first multiparty elections in 1992. At the same time, government suspicions of Muslim aspirations, rooted in both historical and recent events, also intensified. The government's suspicions were first aroused by political developments on the eve of Kenyan independence when Muslims on the coast set up an organization called the Mwambao United Front (MUF) (Mwambao means 'coast' in Kiswahili). The MUF claimed that the Muslim inhabitants of the coast were a 'distinct social group' and should be granted autonomy or the option of seceding from Kenya to establish a separate state or 'rejoin' Zanzibar. In 1963, when Kenya became independent, the coastal population's hopes for separation or autonomy vanished, although they have re-emerged from time to time in different forms and have aroused displeasure and fear in the government. Likewise, the Somali Muslims in the Northeastern Province desired to join Somalia with which they had ethnic, linguistic, social, and religious affinities. After the British decided to include this area in independent Kenya, the Somalis boycotted the 1963 general elections that set the stage for independence. Thereafter, for several years there was unrest, and violent clashes occurred between Somali guerrillas, known as Shifta, and the Kenyan security forces.

Since then, the authorities in general closely monitor Muslim political activities and take harsh measures when these activities seem to threaten the government. The Islamic activities of foreigners in Kenya are watched especially closely. Nevertheless, until the emergence of the Islamic Party of Kenya (IPK), the mutual suspicion between the government and the coastal Muslims seldom led to violent confrontations.

The Islamic Party of Kenya

In January 1992, immediately after the government acceptance of a multiparty system for the forthcoming presidential and parliamentary elections, several Muslim activists in Mombasa established the IPK. Until that time, Kenya had had a one-party system. The government refused to recognize the IPK on the grounds that it was a religious political party and thus violated the principle of the separation of church and state. At this stage, the IPK's demand for recognition won wide support from Muslims, both from the coastal strip and from other parts of the country. In Mombasa, especially, IPK supporters became the main political force and the government's refusal to recognize the party caused violent disturbances there in May 1992. This was the first of a series of clashes between IPK activists and government forces that continued sporadically for nearly two years.

The outbreak of violence reflected Muslim grievances and deep feelings of discrimination. During the colonial era and since independence, Muslims have repeatedly complained that the mainly Christian regime discriminates against them and treats them as second-class citizens. For example, they are normally under-represented in public institutions. Before colonialism they were the most culturally advanced group and were the rulers of Kenya's coastal region, whereas today Muslims are less advanced than the Christians and lag behind in education. They have been denied land ownership, while Christians from the interior have been given land on the coastal strip and control the main sources of income there, especially tourism.

Against this background of Muslim dissatisfaction, a young shaikh, Khalid Balala, appeared on the scene and became the main exponent of Islamic extremism in Kenya during the violent disturbances of 1992–1994. Balala demanded the legalization of the IPK, stressing that in Islam there is no separation of religion and state and that politics is part of religion. Initially he enjoyed wide Muslim support and became the uncrowned head and spokesman of the IPK, which became much more radical under his leadership. His supporters, especially the youth, and some extremist elements began to clash with the security forces. Balala publicly demanded that President Moi's regime be overthrown, and accused him of despotism and corruption. He also called on Muslims to be strict in observing Islamic practices, especially daily prayers. He demanded that the *shari^ca* law be applied in all spheres of Muslim life. Balala advocated violence to achieve these aims.

The wave of violence in Mombasa surprised and concerned the authorities and reawakened the deep suspicions dating from the attempts by the Muslim coastal strip to break away from Kenya at independence. There was also apprehension lest the unrest spread from Mombasa to other Muslim centres, as indeed happened in Lamu and Malindi. Eventually the government succeeded in crushing Balala and the militant Muslims, using the carrot-and-stick and divide-and-rule tactics. Extremists were arrested and brutal force was used against them. On the other hand, the regime began to look more favourably on the demands of moderate Muslims. In addition, the United Muslims of Africa (UMA) was established by government supporters as an opposition to the IPK.

The 1998 bombing of the US embassies in Nairobi and Dar-es-Salaam by foreign Muslim extremists assisted, it is suspected, by some locals highlighted again the problematic relationship between the Muslims and the regime. The government shut down several Muslim NGOs and deported some non-indigenous workers who were suspected of links with radical Middle Eastern organizations, on the grounds that they posed a threat to security. The Muslim community was enraged by the crackdown on the NGOs and leaders of all persuasions condemned the government action. They claimed that, by shutting down only Muslim NGOs immediately after the bombing, the government had put the onus of responsibility on the Muslim community. President Moi met with SUPKEM leaders and made some conciliatory gestures to the Muslims, but radical Muslims continued to criticize the government and attacked the West in general and the US in particular. This division between moderates and radical, as well as ethnic, religious, political, and personal rivalries within the Muslim community, weaken them in their confrontation with the regime.

It is likely that Islam as a religion will further expand and gain strength in Kenya. In its non-extremist form, it may well assume a greater political role in the light of the political progress Muslims are making in the field of education and the increasing numbers of Muslim intellectuals, journalists, and politicians. The prolonged struggle against government policies has fostered Muslim solidarity and self-consciousness, even among non-observant Muslims. The majority of Muslims are moderate, tolerant, and pragmatic and know that the government will never tolerate secession. The Kenyan government, for its part, needs to be more understanding and responsive to justified Muslim grievances, to provide Muslims with equal opportunities, and make greater efforts to integrate them into government and public life.

realpatidar.com

Arye Oded is a senior lecturer at the Institute of African and Asian Studies of the Hebrew University, Jerusalem. He is the author of several books on Islam in East Africa, among them Islam and Politics in Kenya *(Boulder and London, 2000).*
E-mail: msao@mscc.huji.ac.il

https://archive.org/details/bk375/page/n8/mode/1up

2002-12 -The Tale of Hidden Pir -ISIM (375)

Southeast Asia

MARTIN VAN BRUINESSEN

The Violent Fringes of Indonesia's Islam

The 12 October bombing in Bali that killed more than 180 people seemed to vindicate the claims of those who had been accusing the Indonesian authorities of deliberately ignoring the presence on Indonesian soil of Islamic terrorists connected with al-Qa'ida network. More sober voices commented that domestic power struggles, rather than international terrorism, might be responsible for this outrage. It was the largest, but by no means the first major bomb explosion in Indonesia.

PHOTO: STRINGER, © REUTERS 2002

Abu Bakar Ba'asyir holding a news conference in Solo.

Indonesia has seen many bomb explosions since the fall of Suharto in May 1998, and in many cases military personnel appear to be involved. There are also, however, a number of small but conspicuously violent radical Islamic movements that engage in jihad in such places as the Moluccas and Central Sulawesi or act as vigilante squads raiding nightclubs, discotheques, and other dens of inequity.[1] Surprisingly perhaps, several of these militias maintain close relations with factions in the military or political élite.

Laskar Jihad

The largest and best organized of the various Muslim militias – until it was suddenly disbanded in early October, only days before the Bali bombing – was the Laskar Jihad, which was established in response to the onset of civil war between Christians and Muslims in the Moluccas, in 2000.[2] Ideologically this movement is very close to the Saudi religious establishment. Its leader, Ja'far Umar Thalib, had studied with strict Salafi ulama in Saudi Arabia and Yemen and taken part in jihad in Afghanistan in the 1980s. After his return to Indonesia, he became one of the leading lights of the Indonesian Salafi movement, which promoted, Wahhabi style, an apolitical Islam based on a strictly literal reading of the Qur'an and *hadith*. Most members appeared to be students or university graduates and dropouts. Religious leadership is provided by young men, mostly of Arab descent like Ja'far himself, who have also studied with Arabian Salafi ulama.

Laskar Jihad had the visible support of elements in the police and armed forces. It moved thousands of fighters to Ambon and later to other conflict areas in Central Sulawesi, West Papua, and Acheh. In all these areas, a close cooperation with the Indonesian military, notably the Special Forces (Kopassus) developed.

Following 11 September, Laskar Jihad immediately took pains to distance itself from Usama bin Laden. Ja'far Umar Thalib declared that he had met Usama back in the 1980s when he fought in Afghanistan but did not consider him as a good Muslim. The Laskar Jihad website reproduced a fatwa by the late grand mufti of Saudi Arabia, Abdulaziz bin Baz, in which Usama bin Laden was declared an erring sectarian and rebel, whose example no pious Muslim should follow.

In April 2002, the Laskar Jihad challenged a peace agreement between Ambonese Christians and Muslims that had been brokered by cabinet ministers. A Christian village was raided and part of its population massacred. Eyewitnesses claim that Laskar Jihad fighters carried out this raid jointly with a Kopassus unit. This time, Ja'far was detained and put on trial. While his trial was continuing, Ja'far announced in early October 2002 the disbanding of the Laskar Jihad and ordered his followers to return to their homes. These instructions were in most places obeyed with a surprising meekness.

Jemaah Islamiyah

The organization most often mentioned as a likely perpetrator of the Bali bomb massacre is the Jemaah Islamiyah, which has been described by some experts as the Southeast Asian branch of al-Qa'ida. Four alleged members of this network are often mentioned as its chief terrorists: Hambali, alias Ridwan Isamuddin, a West Javanese accused of masterminding the bombing of churches in 10 Indonesian cities at Christmas in 2000, and of taking part in a series of bombings in Manila in 2000 (still at large); Abdur Rahman al-Ghozi, an East Javanese, arrested in the Philippines in January 2002, who reportedly confessed to having taken part in the same bombings in Manila in 2000 and in preparations for attacks on US assets in Singapore; Muhammad Iqbal bin Abdurrahman, alias Abu Jibril, of Lombok, author of a book on the obligation for every Muslim to carry out jihad, and a recruiter for jihad in the Moluccas, has been detained in Malaysia since January 2002 and accused of acting as a financial conduit for al-Qa'ida; and Agus Dwikarna, who was arrested at Manila Airport in March 2002 when the authorities allegedly found a large amount of explosives in his luggage. Dwikarna is the commander of a Muslim militia, Jundullah, in his native province of South Sulawesi.

Abu Bakar Ba'asyir is alleged to be the spiritual leader of this network, although he cannot be directly linked to any of the incidents. All four men named above have an undeniable direct connection with him, however: al-Ghozi studied at his school, Abu Jibril paid a recent visit to the school and took part in the founding conference of a militant organization that chose Ba'asyir as its leader, and Dwikarna is a committee member of that same organization. Hambali is reported to have lived near Ba'asyir during part of the period the latter spent in Malaysia.

It is not entirely clear to what extent this Jemaah Islamiyah actually is a real organization with a well-defined membership and structure of authority. Abu Bakar Ba'asyir has not been afraid of openly proclaiming his admiration for Usama bin Laden, but he denies any direct contact with him. Ba'asyir is the *amir* or commander of a public association of radical Muslims, the Council of Jihad Fighters (Majelis Mujahidin), that was established in August 2002. This organization has a paramilitary wing, the Laskar Mujahidin, which has trained followers in guerrilla techniques and sent them to fight a jihad in the Moluccas. At least dozens, possibly a few hundred, of its members gained combat experience in Afghanistan in the 1980s; many more are likely to have fought in the southern Philippines.

The term JemaahIslamiyah has been used repeatedly during the past twenty years by police authorities as the name for a loose network of radicals in which Ba'asyir, besides another preacher of Arab descent, Abdullah Sungkar, played a central role. They jointly led an Islamic boarding school near the town of Solo since the early 1970s, and they joined the underground Darul Islam movement opposing the Suharto regime and striving for an Islamic state.

They contributed to this movement ideas that they borrowed from the Egyptian Muslim Brothers (al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun). The struggle for an Islamic state, according to these ideas, was a step-by-step process in which the activist had first to engage in moral self-improvement, then to be part of a 'family' (*usrah*) of like-minded people who guide, help, and control one another. These are steps towards the building of an Islamic community (*jama'ah islamiyah*), which in turn is a precondition for the establishment of an Islamic state. From their Islamic school near Solo, Ba'asyir and Sungkar set up a network of committed young Muslims, some of them quietist, some of them militants, all of them opposed to the Suharto regime, organized in 'families' that together were to constitute a true community of committed Muslims, a *jama'ahislamiyah*.

Facing arrest in the mid-1980s, Ba'asyir and Sungkar escaped to Malaysia. According to sources close to the Usrah movement, a Saudi recruiting officer visited Indonesia in 1984 or 1985 and identified Sungkar's and another Darul Islam-related group as the only firm and disciplined Islamic communities (*jama'ah*) capable of jihad. Both were offered financial support to send 50 fighters to Afghanistan. Sungkar found only four men willing to go, the other group eight men. The following year, slightly larger groups of volunteers were sent, and so it went on until 1989, when the Russians withdrew from Afghanistan. Henceforth, they sent their militants to the southern Philippines.

For fourteen years, Sungkar and Ba'asyir remained in Malaysia, living in a village with a circle of their closest disciples and travelling around delivering religious sermons. They were visited by radicals from Indonesia and other regions of Southeast Asia. After Suharto's fall, they returned to Indonesia. Sungkar died in Jakarta during his first return visit; Ba'asyir settled again in his *pesantren* at Ngruki near Solo. The establishment of the Majelis Mujahidin in August 2000 gave him a very public profile.

Other groups

There are a number of other, loosely connected and to some extent competing underground networks that continue the struggle for an Islamic state in Indonesia. They go by the old name of Darul Islam or alternatively NII/TII, abbreviations for Islamic State of Indonesia/Islamic Army of Indonesia. They are not known to have been involved in major violent incidents recently.

The Front Pembela Islam (FPI, Front of Defenders of Islam), with its members dressed in white flowing robes and white turbans, has been conspicuous in numerous demonstrations in Jakarta. They carried out numerous raids on bars, brothels, and nightclubs in Jakarta and the nearby hill districts, causing great material damage but few casualties. Their leader, Habib (Sayyid) Rizieq Shihab, also studied in Saudi Arabia and is a firm proponent of the application of the *shari'a* in public life. He appears to have excellent relations with members of the military and political élite. The Front is definitely the least ideologically motivated of the militant groups listed here, and it is believed that its successes in bringing demonstrators to the streets are primarily due to financial incentives. Not long after 12 October, Rizieq Shihab was arrested (for reasons apparently unrelated to the Bali bombing) and the Front was ordered to disband, which the members did without any sign of protest.

The ease with which FPI and Laskar Jihad could be disbanded once the military authorities really demanded so not only indicates the degree to which both have come under military influence but also reflects the fact that they accept the (secular) government of Indonesia as legitimate in principle – unlike the Majelis Mujahidin, which wishes to transform it into an Islamic state and has not been known to court military or civilian élite factions.

realpatidar.com

Notes

1. Martin van Bruinessen, 'Genealogies of Islamic Radicalism in Indonesia', *South East Asia Research* 10, no. 2 (2002): 117–54.
2. Noorhaidi Hasan, 'Faith and Politics: The Rise of the Laskar Jihad in the Era of Transition in Indonesia', *Indonesia* 73 (2002): 145–69.

Martin van Bruinessen is ISIM Chair at Utrecht University, the Netherlands.
E-mail: martin.vanbruinessen@let.uu.nl

https://archive.org/details/bk375/page/n9/mode/1up

2002-12 -The Tale of Hidden Pir -ISIM (375)

Argentina
PEDRO BRIEGER

Latin Islam since 11 September

The attack on New York's Twin Towers on 11 September 2001 had negative repercussions all over the globe, including in Argentina. Since then, leaders of the Muslim community in Argentina have been invited by the mass media to explain the causes of the attacks, as if Muslims all over the world were in some way linked to the terrorists and their ideas. Although they were approached with respect on many radio and television programmes, there were clear expressions of discrimination and ridicule of Muslims and their beliefs.

At dawn on Sunday, 14 July 2002, the main cemetery of the Muslim community of Argentina was the object of an attack. Just a few miles from the centre of Buenos Aires, taking advantage of the fact that the cemetery does not have special security, unidentified persons entered and desecrated about 150 graves. Although the graves were not completely destroyed and the buried bodies remained untouched, it was clear that the intention was to cause as much damage as possible to the maximum number of graves. The Islamic Cemetery of Buenos Aires was inaugurated in 1961, and against cemeteries are always the work of the police, who in this way attempt to settle internal political issues of the country. 'We are already familiar with this story', writes Kollman, '[e]very time there is a moment of convulsion in the Buenos Aires police corps, a spectacular desecration of graves takes place…. Just like with the Jewish cemeteries, the attacks were now against Muslim graves. The idea is to create an international impact and to put Minister Cafiero (chief of security of the province of Buenos Aires) on the spot.'[3] Kollman is convinced that the attack on the Islamic cemetery is a discriminatory act, given the fact that 'there is no history of desecration of Catholic cemeteries, and here the Muslims are clearly a scapegoat, as Jews are in other cases.' Beyond the internal Argentinean political motivations that the facts may be based on, and even

PHOTO: ENRIQUE MARCARIAN, © REUTERS 2000

Islamic Centre in the heart of Buenos Aires.

there is little movement because – as Zulema Hamze, secretary of the cemetery since 1984, notes – there are only about 4 to 5 funerals per month.[1] The media did put the cemetery in the spotlight on the occasion of the funeral of ex-president Carlos Menem's son, Carlos Facundo Menem, who died in an accident under unclear circumstances in March 1995.

The motives of the assailants were unknown, since no pamphlets were found explaining their actions and no anti-Islamic slogans were painted. On Tuesday, 16 July, the newspaper *Clarín*, with the largest circulation in Argentina, dedicated its editorial to the desecration of the cemetery. Displaying the usual confusion between Arabs and Muslims, *Clarín* ran a headline that read 'The Desecration of the Islamic Cemetery' and proceeded to explain that 'aggression of this nature does not just attack one community in particular, in this case the Arabic one, but all of society.'[2] In contrast, for the journalist Raúl Kollman, who has investigated the repeated attacks against Jewish cemeteries and is the author of the book *Sombras de Hitler* (Shadows of Hitler), acts of violence though the desecration of the graves may not have been targeted towards Muslims, the Islamic community did experience it as a discriminatory act.

Adalberto Assad, president of the cemetery and the Argentinean Arab Islamic Association, believes that 'this is another attack against our community by people who want to spread chaos in society. It also goes against the entire social fabric.' For Sheikh Abdul Karim Paz of the Shi'ite mosque at-Tauhid of the Flores neighbourhood, 'it is the first time that the community goes through something like this; it is a very bitter moment. The message is terrible and deceitful.'

The desecration of the graves, however, is not the first violent act against the Islamic community in Argentina, since two of the three mosques in the country have been the target of attacks in the past. In January 2001, strangers threw a bomb against the façade of at-Tauhid mosque, and in June 1986, a few days before the inauguration of the mosque on Alberti Street, an explosive device blew up the windows facing the street.

Personal experiences

When consulted on the subject of discrimination, most of the members of the Muslim community tend to say that there is no discrimination in Argentina. Imam Mahmud Husain, ex-president of the Association for the Spreading of Islam in Latin America and director of the Centre of Higher Islamic Studies in Argentina, has tried on more than one occasion to organize the Islamic community politically, but his attempts have failed. Husain compares the experience of the Muslims with that of Jews, who organize themselves easily because 'they have a historic experience of persecution, they are in a hostile environment. The Christian environment is hostile to Jews, and as a minority they need to always be represented politically. This has not been the case with Muslims. We could say that Judaism as a minority always acts with a minority awareness, whereas Islam as a minority acts with a majority awareness. Tradition itself has led Islam to do so, because it sees itself as all peoples, all persons, all races, and all cultures. It does not see itself as a minority.'

Nonetheless, until the reform of the Constitution in 1994, advanced by ex-president Carlos Saúl Menem, Muslims were discriminated against at some of the most important government levels, such as access to the presidency, which was off limits. As admitted by his ex-wife, Zulema Yoma, Menem abandoned Islam and converted to Christianity in 1966 because his main ambition was to become president of the country and the 1853 Constitution prevented non-Catholics from holding that position. According to that Constitution, when taking office the president and vice-president had to swear by saying 'I, [name], pledge by God our Lord and these Holy Gospels, to perform with loyalty and patriotism the function of president.'[4]

Once in the presidency, Menem promoted the reform of the Constitution, and since 1994 the only requirement to become president is to have been born in Argentinean territory or be the child of a native citizen.[5] The reform also altered the pledge, and when taking office the president and vice-president now vow to 'perform loyally and with patriotism the function of president (or vice-president) of the Nation and observe the Constitution of the Argentinean Nation, respecting its religious beliefs.'[6]

It is only when one delves into the personal experiences of Muslims in Argentina that discrimination comes out into the open, going beyond the typical association of 'Turkish' (which equals Muslim or Arab), which Muslims have already come to accept as part of the country's folklore. The architect Hamurabi Noufouri, son of Syrian parents, is professor of Islamic and Mudejar Art since 1998 in the departments of Architecture, Industrial Design, Dress Design, and Textile Design at Buenos Aires University. In December 2000 he was informed that his position at the Faculty of Architecture would be revoked, although he would continue in the other departments. He was verbally told that his subject, 'although culturally interesting, is not pertinent to the official programme',[7] which Noufouri considered to be an act of discrimination. He promptly complained in a formal letter to several academic institutions and to the National Institute against Discrimination, Xenophobia, and Racism (INADI). Noufouri gave a great deal of publicity to his situation, and although he never received an official answer from the university, in October 2001 he was informed that the subject would be reinstated to the architecture faculty. Noufouri, who was a cultural aide at the Islamic Centre of the Argentine Republic (CIRA), affirms that despite his problem he is not discriminated against for being a Muslim, although 'there is always some kind of differential consideration when they find out I am a Muslim.'

One of the most symbolic cases of an openly anti-Islamic attitude took place on television. In September 2001, after the attacks on the Twin Towers, the journalist Guillermo Cherasny, known for his public statements in favour of the military taking armed action against the democratic system, said in a broadcast of his television programme *Brokers* that 'Arabs and Muslims are damn nazis'. These words gave cause to a public legal complaint of CIRA against the journalist – which is not over yet.[8]

It is still very difficult to determine if the desecration of graves at the Islamic Cemetery was an anti-Islamic action. The ambiguous relationship between misunderstanding, ignorance, and discriminatory attitudes against minorities, and the particularities of Argentinean politics, which always contains elements of violence, do not allow us to arrive at a clear-cut conclusion. In any event, regardless of the intention of those who desecrated the graves, for the Islamic community of Argentina this was yet another link in a campaign against Islam that was only enhanced after 11 September. Concurring with the journalist Simon Birinder of the *Buenos Aires Herald*, one could also say that, more than discrimination, 'it is unfortunate but true, that few Argentines really understand what Islam is about.'[9]

Notes

1. This information and the citations in this article, unless stated otherwise, are based on a number of interviews with those directly concerned conducted by the author in 2001 and 2002.
2. *Clarín*, 16 July 2002.
3. Raúl Kollman, 'Profanadores y policías', *Página/12*, 16 July 2002.
4. Roberto Pedro Lopresti, *ConstituciónArgentina*, edited by Unilat (Buenos Aires, 1998). (Article 93 of the Constitution, pp. 62–3).
5. Article 89 of the reformed Constitution. See Constitution *op.cit.* p. 61.
6. '[D]esempeñar con lealtad y patriotismo el cargo de presidente (o vicepresidente) de la Nación y observar y hacer observar fielmente la Constitución de la Nación Argentina respetando sus creencias religiosas.' Art. 93 of the reformed Constitution, see note 4.
7. Quoted in the letter of Hamurabi Noufouri to the architect Bernardo Dujovne, Dean of the Faculty of Architecture, Design, and Urbanism of the University of Buenos Aires, 6 December 2000.
8. *Noticias judiciales*, no. 817, year IV, 25 September 2001 (www.inabogados.com.ar/).
9. Simon Birinder, 'Argentines and the Real Face of Islam', *Buenos Aires Herald*, 10 February 2002.

Pedro Brieger, sociologist, is chairperson of the Middle East Department (DEMO) at the Institute of International Relations of La Plata University, and researcher on the Islamic community in Argentina at Buenos Aires University.
E-mail: pbrieger@wamani.apc.org

realpatidar.com

https://archive.org/details/bk375/page/n10/mode/1up

2002-12 -The Tale of Hidden Pir -ISIM (375)

The Balkans

ISA BLUMI

Indoctrinating Albanians

Dynamics of Islamic Aid

'Albanians have been Muslims for more than 500 years and they do not need outsiders [Arabs] to tell them what is the proper way to practise Islam.' Mufti of Kosova, Rexhep Boja's recent retort to the efforts of Arab NGOs to impose their Salafi practices on Kosovar Albanians reflects a largely unappreciated phenomenon in the post-communist Balkans. The following exposes the questionable manner in which Western powers have compartmentalized their priorities in the region and how Saudi-based humanitarian agencies have filled in the vacuum. At issue is how Western policies of 'conflict resolution' have left 'ethno-religious' communities at the mercy of international, 'faith-based' organizations that, in turn, exploit the poverty and fragmented social conditions of – in our case here – Albanians.

PHOTO: REINHARD KRAUSE. © REUTERS 1999

Albanian refugees from Kosovo at a United Arab Emirates refugee camp in Kukes, Albania.

As a result of policies that have basically deferred addressing rural Kosova's social and economic needs to organizations whose basic modus operandi is the religious indoctrination of the population, much of Kosova's rural society is being isolated from their fellow countrymen and the world at large. A result of such isolation is the increasing vulnerability of Kosova's Muslims to hostility emanating from those very Western governments that neglected to address their initial needs. It is therefore ironic that as self-proclaimed Western societies cower before the 'the rise of Islamic fundamentalism', their discriminatory policies towards Kosova's rural 'Muslim' population may prove to be directly responsible for the production of Europe's own 'Taliban', which in the future may indeed prove hostile to 'Western values and interests'.

Future *talibs*?

The central problem is not doctrinal but socio-economic. After decades of discrimination and two years of war resulting in the murder of much of the adult male population in rural areas, Kosova's peasants are living in abject poverty.[1] Many rural communities in Kosova have, as a result, become more or less dependent on outside NGOs. The most active in rural Kosova has been the Saudi Joint Committee for the Relief of Kosova and Chechnya (SJCRKC), which has provided for the basic daily needs of over a hundred communities. While food, housing, and clothing are provided by the SJCRKC, its primary task has been education. The forced segregation of the sexes in schools, the focus on young male education based on the memorization of the Qur'an, and little if any emphasis on what many would deem essential survival skills have attracted the suspicion of Kosova's indigenous Muslim and secular leaders.

As a consequence, open hostility towards Saudi efforts to control the content of the spiritual lives of Albanians, the destruction of many historical sites deemed to encourage 'idolatry', and other confrontations between indigenous forms of religious practice and what many see as 'Arab cultural imperialism' have become manifest. While small numbers of Albanians from the former Yugoslavia did go to study Islamic theology in the Arabic-speaking world (many travelled to study under the now deceased Albanian-born scholar, Nasir al Din al-Albani), the vast majority of Albanians had no previous cultural contact with the larger Islamic world. The recent influences from the outside, with their substantial aid packages, have clearly changed this. The nature of this change is creating an environment that pits local organizations trying to maintain local Islamic traditions, as personified by Rexhep Boja and the Albanian grand mufti, Hafiz Koçi, against those influenced by imported practices.

Despite their efforts, with little or no financial resources of their own and the neglect of interest among the members of Kosova's internationally imposed administrators, Kosova's leaders are incapable of providing an alternative to the Salafi educational practices that are being propagated in many parts of rural Kosova. The SJCRKC reported in late 2001 to have invested four million Saudi riyals in Kosova. Nearly half of that (about USD 500,000) had been spent to sponsor 388 religious 'propagators' (i.e. missionaries) in the immediate post-war period. What these propagators – whom I would call experts in post-conflict assessment – did was identify the communities most suitable to their agenda. While there are no official numbers published, at least 98 mosque complexes with and without accompanying schools have been built in rural Kosova as a result of their work.[2] One can draw comparisons to Afghan communities in the 1980s when large numbers of orphaned and single-mother families were also dependent on Saudi 'charity' in the border refugee camps of Pakistan. As with Afghans, rural Kosovars, dependant on the 'generosity' of others, have become vulnerable to 'foreign' doctrines and practices.

In many ways local resistance to SJCRKC has taken on the tone of general hostility towards Arabs that is being beamed across the 24-hour news programmes watched with great interest in Kosova. There is a growing sense among Kosova's urban population, for instance, that by being associated to the same faith as Usama bin Laden (there is no differentiation made between Salafi practitioners in Kosova – locals call them *muhajaddin* – today and Bin Laden), that Kosovars' long-term desires for independence are being in some way jeopardized. As a result, new political lines are being drawn in Kosovar society, reflecting more than ever the rural/urban divide that has historically divided the Kosova population (Blumi 2001). In reaction, many among those who have become reliant on SJCRKC assistance feel persecuted, a condition that is politicized by some. Political Islam as it has emerged in other parts of the world, therefore, while still at its infancy in Kosova is transforming to fit local dynamics. One can follow in the Islamic Community of Kosova's (Bashkesia Islame e Kosovës (BIK)) journal *Takvimi*, the occasional debate over the merits of an Islamic party in dealing with the political and social issues plaguing Kosova today. Indeed, advocates for the creation of an Islamic party in general reveal a growing sense of political power in rural Kosovar society, one that is becoming more interventionist when it comes to influencing cultural mores and articulating a distinctive voice for rural Kosova.

Albania

Interestingly, Albanians are not destined to take the 'Taliban' route. Indeed, Muslims in Albania have successfully thwarted the penetration of Wahhabi extremism in their communities. Unlike rural Kosova, parents in Albania always had a number of options for educating their children. This proves key. In Albania, not only are there dozens of schools that have been erected since 1990 by foreign Christian organizations that try to woo the population away from their 50 years of communist indoctrination, but a Turkish faith-based organization inspired by the liberal Fetullah Gülen has also opened a number of well-attended *dershanes* in Albania (Agai 2002; Balci 2002). Armed with doctrinal and sectarian alternatives, local Muslims in the Albanian-speaking regions of the Balkans prove, when given a choice, effective in staving off the indoctrinating efforts of outside interests. In Albania, as noted in interviews with the grand mufti of Albania and others, Arab Salafi organizations, while targeting Albania as a potential area of influence in the early 1990s, have all but abandoned the country, choosing to focus their resources on Kosova's rural population. Why this happened is significant in that Albanians in Albania clearly made a choice to not go down the Wahhabi route. Salafi organizations, eager to proselytize as other evangelical groups coming from the United States or their Greek Orthodox rivals south of the border, learned that Albanian Muslims, when armed with a choice between their brand of intolerant and rigid spirituality and others, preferred the milder track. This lesson could again be taught in Kosova if communities were given similar resources.

Among Albanian-speaking Muslims, the issues discussed here are particularly important as their self-perceived place in the world is now dominated by anti-Muslim sentiments. The sense of being unwelcome by Europe, of being persecuted and indeed blamed for events taking place in other parts of the globe by Americans is a common theme among self-identified Muslims today. This sense of exclusion is being used in some quarters to shift community loyalties away from Europe and the United States. Such a sense of increasing isolation, as European, US, and non-denominational organizations continue to ignore the spiritual, educational, and cultural needs of local populations, breeds the right kind of resentment needed to produce a new generation of supporters of anti-Western causes. With more than 98 primary and secondary schools built throughout rural Kosova, the creation of a new generation of Albanian Muslims is underway. As the outside world has given free reign to Saudi-based organizations to set up orphanages, mosques, and schools, the results in the isolated regions of Kosova are already evident.

While many continue to resist the sectarian implications of these activities, others concede that the arrival of these proselytizing organizations are creating internal conflicts as people are drawn by promises of money, jobs, education, and indeed a new identity. Unless immediate attention is paid to providing an alternative for rural communities in Kosova, the spectacle of outside powers manipulating internal sectarian differences, as in Lebanon in the 1970s and 1980s, is a distinct possibility. It would be yet another tragic demonstration of Western short-sightedness that its failure to provide a few million dollars to rebuild the lives of hundreds of thousands of human beings would result in decades of conflict and instability. The economic stinginess and the cultural chauvinism that produces this neglect may come back to haunt Europe, ending any illusion that things have been made right in the Balkans over the last three years.

Notes

1. According to the latest data produced by the international community, Kosova's rural population is the poorest in Europe, after Moldova and Tajikistan. Unemployment throughout the country is around 80 per cent, and upwards of 20 per cent of the population lives in abject poverty. See ICG, 'A Kosovo Road Map: Final Status' (www.crisisweb.org).
2. Consult the Official Saudi information website for news on activities of various Saudi 'charities' in Kosova (www.saudinf.com).

References

- *Agai, Bekim. 2002. Fethullah Gülen and His Movement's Islamic Ethic of Education.* Critique: Critical Middle Eastern Studies *11/1 (Spring): 27–47.*
- *Balci, Bayram. 2002. Fethullah Gülen'in neo-nurcu okullari.* Toplum ve Bilim *(Summer): 93, 251–83.*
- *Blumi, Isa. 2001. Kosova: From the Brink – and Back Again.* Current History *(November): 15–20.*

Isa Blumi is a Ph.D. candidate at the Joint History and Middle Eastern Studies Program at NYU and academic editor for the Kosova-based think-tank, KIPRED.
E-mail: isablumi@yahoo.com

Link: http://www.realpatidar.com/library
email: mail@realpatidar.com

https://archive.org/details/bk375/page/n11/mode/1up

2002-12 -The Tale of Hidden Pir -ISIM (375)

South Africa
SINDRE BANGSTAD

Revisiting PAGAD
Machoism or Islamism?

Two years after the first free elections in the history of South Africa, which brought the liberation movement to political power, a new twist was added to the seemingly ever-present violence of the gang-lands of Cape Town. A vigilante movement dominated by Cape Muslims, People Against Gangsterism and Drugs (PAGAD), launched a series of assassinations of local drug lords and vowed to free the post-apartheid townships of the scourge of crime and drugs. Since autumn of the year 2000, PAGAD's militant actions have ceased to pose a security threat in Cape Town. Most of the militants of the movement are behind bars. But even long after the movement reached its zenith and decline, academics have failed to reach a consensus over what the peculiar phenomenon of PAGAD actually represented.

PHOTO: JUDA NGWENYA, © REUTERS

PAGAD demonstration in Pretoria's Laudium suburb.

PAGAD grew out of a network of civic movements and neighbourhood watches on the so-called Cape Flats, and was established by a group of predominantly Muslim teachers and social workers in 1996. Cape Flats refers to the residential areas to which Cape Town's coloured population was forcibly removed when strict residential segregation was imposed by the apartheid authorities in the 1960s and 1970s. The living conditions in the townships of the Cape Flats vary, but the general pattern is one of overcrowding, lack of public facilities, and increasing unemployment. For the coloured gangs involved in crime and trafficking in drugs, the Cape Flats had proven to be fertile ground for recruitment ever since the forced removals. Among ordinary township residents, there was at the time of PAGAD's emergence a perception to the effect that the level of crime had spiralled out of control since the abolishment of apartheid, and that the post-apartheid authorities were unable and unwilling to curtail the activities of township gangs.

From the outset, PAGAD was a media phenomenon. The movement burst into the media headlines when a renowned gangster from the Cape Flats, Rashaad Staggie, was assassinated *in camera* by a mob of PAGAD supporters outside his home in the suburb of Salt River on 4 August 1996. South African vigilantism has traditions dating back to the late 19th century. What was new in the case of PAGAD was that this time it was perpetrated by a movement drawing heavily on the religious imagery of Islam. PAGAD's stance towards the local media was ambiguous: on the one hand, PAGAD leaders knew very well that township youngsters in Cape Town were attracted by the visual images of the seemingly omnipotent, scarf-clad PAGAD members that appeared in the media. On the other hand, the white-dominated media was lambasted as 'Islamophobic' by PAGAD on various occasions.

The Muslims of Cape Town

The coloured Muslims of Cape Town are the descendants of slaves and political exiles brought to the 'Mother City' in the period between 1658 and 1808, and of miscegenation between the various ethnic groups present in South Africa through and since the colonial era. The Indian Muslims of Cape Town are the descendants of free Muslim tradesmen and some indentured labourers that both arrived in South Africa in the late 19th century. Whereas a mere 1.4 per cent of South Africans are Muslim, approximately 10.4 per cent of Cape Townians are Muslim.[1] Historically, the cultural and religious practices of the Cape Muslims have been heavily influenced by Sufism. The Islam of the Cape Muslims can generally be considered as tolerant, which is indicated by a high frequency of intermarrying and socializing with non-Muslims, especially among the poorer sections of the community.

Throughout the years of apartheid, most Cape Muslims remained politically complacent. Individual Muslims, such as the Pan-Africanist Congress-oriented imam Abdullah Haron (who died in police detention in 1969) made great sacrifices in the struggle against apartheid. The Pan-Africanist Congress was a splinter group from the ANC Youth League, established in 1959 under the leadership of Robert Mangaliso Sobukwe. Young Muslim anti-apartheid activists took part in the struggle of the streets in Call of Islam and Qibla, as well as in the umbrella anti-apartheid movement United Democratic Front[2] in the 1980s, but they were in minority in their communities. In the post-apartheid context, however, one has seen a selective process of remembering among Cape Muslims in which the Muslim contribution to the fight against apartheid, rather than the complacency of most Muslims in that era, has been highlighted. It seems reasonable to regard this as the outcome of the attempts of Cape Muslim leaders to position the Muslim community vis-à-vis the post-apartheid authorities.[3]

The internal conflicts

The assassination of Rashaad Staggie in 1996 exposed the conflictive interests and opinions of Cape Muslims. The state apparatus, represented by the senior ANC minister Mohammed 'Dullah' Omar, had initially sought to bring PAGAD into alignment with the government through talks with the leaders of the movement, but through the assassination of Staggie, PAGAD had in effect made this impossible. PAGAD was labelled a vigilante movement by the government, and the minority of Cape Muslims supportive of the ANC government turned their backs towards PAGAD's actions, which they regarded as counter-productive. The path towards an increasing anti-state rhetoric of PAGAD leaders in the following years, and the process of government labelling of PAGAD members as 'urban terrorists' that ensued, lay open. But PAGAD could count on massive support from the Cape Muslim community. In a survey published in November 1996 it was found that 62 per cent of Muslim respondents were supportive of PAGAD. In comparison, a mere 17 per cent of Christian respondents were supportive of the movement.[4] The support of the Muslim middle class and lower-middle class in coloured residential areas appeared to be particularly strong. In sum, PAGAD had popular but not intellectual support. Many Cape Muslim intellectuals paid a heavy price for distancing themselves from PAGAD's actions: in 1998, a pipe-bomb was thrown at the house of the senior scholar in Religious Studies, Dr Ebrahim Moosa. A prominent imam, Sa'dullah Khan (imam at al-Quds Masjid in Gatesville, one of the largest mosques in Cape Town), received death threats and opted to leave the country; whereas the senior ANC politician, Ebrahim Rasool, lived under constant police surveillance for long periods.

But the toll exacted on ordinary township residents was – as usual – higher. As the assassination attempts on gangsters on the Cape Flats degenerated into regular warfare between PAGAD and the gangs, civilians were caught in the crossfire. In the community of 'Mekaar' (the name of which has been altered), where I was to undertake fieldwork two years later, stray bullets killed a six-year-old girl in November 1998, as was the case with two other minors the same year. Two suspected PAGAD members, both practising Muslims, were later convicted for her murder on the grounds of 'common purpose'.

Academic representation of PAGAD

The academic literature on the PAGAD phenomenon is limited. No systematic investigation of the movement has been undertaken. There are however, a number of theses, articles, and reports, the most significant of which have been produced by academics affiliated to the University of Cape Town and the University of the Western Cape in Bellville.[5] These authors' analyses of PAGAD diverge on one point in particular. Tayob and Esack point to the links between Islamist rhetoric and PAGAD's actions, whereas Jeppie and Pillay are sceptical about attaching importance to such links. Pillay perceives PAGAD as an expression of globalized, Hollywood-style representations of machoism that have been appropriated and localized by both the gangs and the vigilantes. Jeppie suggests that PAGAD reflects a crisis of leadership among South African Muslims, and that it serves as an avenue for the reinsertion of former drug addicts and petty gangsters into society. Hence, to both Pillay and Jeppie the religious imagery invoked by PAGAD appears to be mere strategic posturing for the Muslim township public. Even though one should not necessarily take the assertions of PAGAD members at face value, such analyses risk treating the outward expressions of PAGAD as mere epiphenomena in relation to the social causes of the phenomenon. For instance, there seems to be little doubt that Qibla, a militant organization heavily influenced by Islamism, gained control over PAGAD after the assassination of Staggie in 1996. My experience with PAGAD members during fieldwork suggests that Islamism may be of greater significance than what has been assumed so far. All but one of the alleged PAGAD members in 'Mekaar' had at some point pursued religious careers. One of them was a long-standing member of Qibla, whose formative political experiences had been the Iranian revolution of 1979 and the anti-apartheid struggle of the 1980s. This is certainly at some remove from the impressions of the 'gun-ho' machoism that was so central to the local media's representation of PAGAD. As a political and social phenomenon, PAGAD was intimately bound up with the hybrid social formations from which it originated, and was therefore multi-faceted. The question of whether PAGAD is an expression of machoism or Islamism is an awkward one, since it appears to have expressed both.

Notes

1. According to the population census of 1996.
2. Call of Islam, established in 1983, was supportive of the UDF and the ANC. Qibla, established in 1980, had an agenda of implementing the *shari'a*.
3. See also S. Jeppie, 'Commemorations and Identities: The 1994 Tercentenary of Islam in South Africa', in T. Sonn (ed.), *Islam and the Question of Minorities* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1996), 73–91.
4. Africa et al, *Crime and Community Action: PAGAD and the Cape Flats 1996–1997* (Cape Town: IDASA Public Opinion Service, 1998).
5. See for instance A. Tayob, 'Jihad Against Drugs in Cape Town: A Discourse-Centred Analysis', *Social Dynamics* 22/2 (1996): 23–29; F. Esack, 'PAGAD and Islamic Radicalism: Taking on the State?', *Indicator S.A.* 13/4 (1997): 7–11; S. Pillay, 'There's a Fundamentalist on My Stoep: Problematizing Representations of PAGAD', Unpublished seminar paper (Bellville: University of the Western Cape, 1998); S. Jeppie, 'Islam, Narcotics and Defiance in the Western Cape, South Africa', in K. King (ed.), *Development in Africa – Africa in Development*, (Edinburgh: Centre for African Studies, 2000), 217–232; and B. Dixon and L. M. Johns, *Gangs, PAGAD and the State: Vigilantism and Revenge Violence in the Western Cape* (Braamfontein: Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation, 2001).

Sindre Bangstad graduated with a cand. polit. degree in social anthropology from the University of Bergen, Norway (2002), and is affiliated with the Chr. Michelsen Institute in Bergen, Norway.
E-mail: Srinkebangstad@yahoo.no

Link: http://www.realpatidar.com/library
email: mail@realpatidar.com

https://archive.org/details/bk375/page/n12/mode/1up

2002-12 -The Tale of Hidden Pir -ISIM (375)

Europe

ARMINA OMERIKA

Bosnian Young Muslims 1939–1991
A Survey

The Bosnian Young Muslims, a reformist Islamic movement that emerged in Sarajevo in 1939 and – officially – ceased to exist ten years later, is even today subject to many controversies. The attempts to characterize this movement include a whole range of contradictory designations, ranging from hostile approaches in which the members of the movement are depicted as pan-Islamist terrorists whose activities aimed at the overthrow of the Yugoslavian state and establishing of an Islamic order, to sympathetic views in which it is presented as a basically democratic movement established on Islamic humanitarian principles that tried to resist the dictatorial communist regime of post-war Yugoslavia.

The history of the Young Muslim organization and its impact on the (self-)conceptions of Islam in Bosnia can be examined through different stages of development (1939–1943, 1943–1946, 1946–1949, and 1970s–1991). These stages can be defined in terms of several interdependent factors, of which the organizational forms of the movement and its ideological aims can be regarded as the most important ones.

The Young Muslim organization emerged in Sarajevo in 1939. The time of foundation, the name, and even some ideological postulates suggest that its foundation was related to the more or less simultaneous emergence of similar pan-Islamist movements in the Islamic world, particularly in Egypt and Indonesia. There are, however, no indications of a direct influence of such movements on the Young Muslims, especially bearing in mind their education and age (basically pupils and students between 16 and 26 years of age), the lack of any travelling experience, their non-acquaintance with Oriental languages, the difficult access to the works of contemporary Arabic writers in the Bosnian language, and finally, their non-alignment to the Bosnian ulama, at least at the early stage of their development, which could have compensated for the above-mentioned limitations.

The time of the movement's foundation, the late 1930s and the early 1940s, was marked by several factors of particular importance for the Yugoslavian Muslims: a crisis of national identity; the decreasing importance of Muslims within the Yugoslavian political landscape; the reinforcement of nationalism in Serbia and Croatia; the emergence of a secular Bosnian intellectual élite along with the parallel decline of the traditional religious Muslim élites; and, finally, the challenge of communist and fascistic ideologies, both of which were opposed to the Young Muslims' conceptions of Islam.

Alija Izetbegović

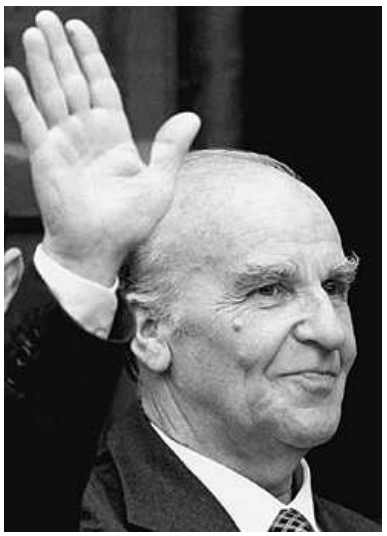


PHOTO: DANILO KRSTANOVIĆ. © REUTERS, 2000

Early developments

The Young Muslim movement developed around a group of students (Husref Bašagic, Emin Granov, Esad Karadjozović, and Tarik Muftić), who initiated a common forum for discussions and debates on Islamic subjects. The first Young Muslims were mainly students from universities and high schools aged between 16 and 26 years. Their activities during the years 1939 and 1941 were established on the basis of private contacts and informal meetings. During the latter, some of the activists presented papers on specific subjects connected to Islam, whereupon the group had to discuss the arguments of the presenters.

Despite the lack of hierarchical or organizational structures, this period was decisive for the later development of the Young Muslim organization: it was during this time that their network, which was to spread across all major Bosnian and even some other Yugoslavian cities during the years to follow, was initiated. Furthermore, their main ideological and programmatic guidelines were formulated. Islamic decadence, the relationship between Islam and science as well as that between Islam and other religions and ideologies, the status of Islam and Muslims in Europe and particularly in Yugoslavia, the necessity of a social renaissance of Muslim peoples and the decisive role of Islamic education in it: all these topics were already present in the early Young Muslim agenda and were to run through the members' writings and the group's activities until the 1990s, in more or less elaborated ways.

The foundation as an organization took place in Sarajevo in March 1941. However, the outbreak of the Second World War obviated an official entry into the Yugoslavian register of associations. In order to avoid complete dissolution, the Young Muslims were compelled to join the ulama association el-Hidaje, despite their critical attitude towards the Bosnian religious officials and the protests of some activists like Alija Izetbegović and Nedžib Šaćirbegović against the linkage to the much-criticized clergy. In 1943, after almost two years of organizational abeyance, the Young Muslims were officially proclaimed the youth section of the ulama association. This status had significant impact on both their organizational structures and ideology. Informal networks became substituted by officially stipulated association structures. El-Hidaje officials, especially the association's president Mehmed Handžić and his vice-president Kasim Dobrača, helped to 'domesticate' the radical, to a certain extent politically determined demands, such as those postulated by the founding members Esad Karadjozović and Tarik Muftić. Now, the religious-ethical dimension of Islam was emphasized; this new direction fitted more in the frame of traditional Islamic subjects rather than in the avant-garde discourse on Islam they had originally tried to establish. During this period, i.e. between 1943 and 1945, the number of members significantly increased and the organization expanded into the major Bosnian, and even some other Yugoslavian cities.

Underground and abroad

In 1945, el-Hidaje was officially dissolved, and the Young Muslim organization went underground. They established an illegal network that influenced both young urban intellectuals and much of the young rural population. Initially tolerated by the new regime, they went for open confrontation with the communists as early as 1946, especially when they protested against the militant secularization policy of the new Yugoslavian government. In 1946, several members were arrested and sent to prison. The final crushing of the organization took place during the Sarajevo trial in August 1949. Four leading members were condemned to death; many others were arrested and sentenced to long imprisonments. A precise number of arrested, persecuted, and/or executed members, though, cannot be definitely specified.

After their release from prison, some of the Young Muslims emigrated to West European countries. Those who remained in Bosnia and confined themselves to private contacts with each other officially retreated from further engagements in the Young Muslim 'cause'. Nonetheless, it was this kind of private contact that enabled them to keep in touch under the vigilant eyes of the Yugoslavian Secret Service, and to take active part in the Islamic revival in Bosnia that was made possible due to the liberalization of policy with respect to religion in 1970s Yugoslavia. However, they not only had been participants in this awakening of religion among Yugoslavian, and especially Bosnian Muslims; to a considerable extent, they also gave this movement their fresh impetus by launching newspapers and magazines on Islamic subjects and by publishing their writings under pseudonyms, either in the official organs of the Islamska Vjerska Zajednica (Islamic Religious Community) or as separate, autonomous works.

Finally, by initializing discussion and education circles, the former Young Muslim members succeeded in creating a new network, which consisted of some former Young Muslims and a number of Bosnian Muslim intellectuals of the younger generation. The latter, both secular intellectuals and young ulama from the Faculty of Islamic Theology, actively took part in the discussion circles. The ideas that circulated among them followed the pattern established by the Young Muslims, though in a modified way. The new works, like Alija Izetbegović's *Islamic Declaration* and *Islam between the East and West*,[1] to name but these two as the best known ones, reflected the new age structure, but also the acquaintance of their authors with various contemporary ideological thoughts, and the influences that resulted thereof.

In August 1983, in a second wave of persecution, some activists of the network were tried for 'separatism' and 'Islamic fundamentalism' and sent to prison with sentences of up to nine years. Among those were the former Young Muslims Alija Izetbegović, Omer Behmen, Salih Behmen, Ešref Čampara, and Ismet Kasumagić, as well as the younger intellectuals Džemaludin Latić, Edhem Bičakčić, HasanČengić, Husein Živalj, and Mustafa Spahić. Izetbegović was accused of having organized a 'group' whose aims were to conduct 'contra-revolutionary' actions in Yugoslavia and to establish an Islamic state in Yugoslavia.[2] The indictment, however, was more an ideologically coloured determent of regime critics rather than an accusation based upon real proof.

The two lines that now constituted the network – the 'old' Young Muslims and the members of the younger generation – became the core of the Stranka Demokratske Akcije (SDA), a political party founded in 1991 and since regarded as the only 'true' political representative of Muslim population in Bosnia – a presumptuous self-description, though repeatedly confirmed during the political elections in Bosnia.

The ideas that had been developed at the early stages of the Young Muslim movement continued – to a certain extent modified – to exist until the last decade of the 20th century, despite the official prohibition of the movement in 1946, its being crushed 1949, and the subsequent imprisonment of the organization's members. The ideological continuity was guaranteed through the 'individual factor', i.e. through the network of informal and private contacts of some ex-Young Muslims amongst each other and with the younger generation of Muslim intellectuals in Bosnia, especially in the course of the general liberalization of policy on religion in Yugoslavia during the 1970s.

Notes

1. Alija Izetbegović, *Islam izmedu Istoka i Zapada* (Sarajevo, 1984) and *Islamska deklaracija* (Sarajevo, 1990).
2. Abid Prguda, *Sarajevski proces. Sudenje muslimanskim intelektualcma 1983* (Sarajevo, 1990), 37–51.

Armina Omerika, M.A., is a Ph.D. candidate in the Junior Research Group (VW Foundation) on 'Islamic Networks of Education in Local and Transnational Contexts, 18th–20th Centuries', Ruhr-University Bochum, Germany.
E-mail: Jesen.IN@gmx.net

realpatidar.com

https://archive.org/details/bk375/page/n13/mode/1up

2002-12 -The Tale of Hidden Pir -ISIM (375)

The Netherlands
SADIK HARCHAOUI

Church and State in Multicultural Society

There seems to be an irreconcilable gap between the Dutch state and its Muslim inhabitants. This impression is transforming into an increasingly popular standpoint, not only in politics and the media but also among legal philosophers, historians, and jurists. As *the* mantra that supports the apparent gap, what tends to be singled out is the principle of the separation of church and state. This separation is allegedly alien to Islam, and therefore Islam is irreconcilable with the idea of a constitutional state. The mantra appears to be a common-knowledge fact, for which reason any substantiation and explanations are casually dropped out, but wrongfully so.

The state under the rule of law and the principle of the separation of church and state are not unambiguous concepts. The relevance and scope of the principle is unclear; moreover, a fair question can be raised as to whether this liberal principle is even problematic at all in relation to Muslims in the Netherlands.

The foundations of the state under the rule of law are the principles of legality, separation of powers, civil rights, and judicial control. Individual freedom is most important. The individual determines his or her own human vision and there is no dominant reality. Given that the government can never prescribe what 'real' freedom is, it should keep its distance.

PHOTO: EVELYNE JACQ, HOLLANDSE HOOGTE

Hearing on the court clerks' right to wear headscarves in the courtroom.

Historically, individual conscience became recognized as absolute freedom to put an end to the claims of absolutistic theocratic monarchs. As a result, religious freedom became a fact. By eliminating the privileged position of the ruling church(es), church and state were in fact separated. This was enhanced by all the subjects' simultaneous claim to fundamental civil rights. In the Netherlands, the actual separation of church and state was completed in the process starting in 1917, which led to the pillar system in which pluralistic (religious) views found a place for themselves. The state has known no religious ideology ever since; its worldview became neutral. But are the prayer in this year's queen's address, the edge inscription of the euro reading that God is with us, and the reference to the Almighty at the beginning of our laws mere subtleties? The fact that the Netherlands works within the European Union with countries that give different content to this important principle (England, Norway, Greece) is often conveniently 'forgotten' in domestic political discourse.

Separation and the Muslim presence

After 11 September 2001, the presence of about 860,000 Muslims in the Netherlands has been increasingly perceived as a problem. People do not talk these days about 'Muslims', they talk about 'Islam' – as if it were a national organization. The image of church and state does not fit the mosque, as religious variation is large and there is a diversity of interpretations and views.

When is the principle of the separation of church and state relevant today? In the first place, when the government singles out certain religions (whereas Islam as an ideological concept is not presently singled out by the Dutch government). Moreover, there are no Islamic parties at a national or local level with political power to favour 'Islam' over other ideologies. The situation in which only associations with a Christian orientation are eligible for subsidies, as was occasionally the case in municipalities controlled by Dutch Reformed parties in the 1980s, has no Islamic equivalent. On the contrary, and in conflict with the law, the mantra of the separation of church and state is in fact used as legitimation to prevent subsidizing Islamic prayer facilities and schools.[1] Second, the liberal principle becomes relevant when 'Islam' can exert political influence. This does not seem to be the case either. Again, there is no unified national Islamic organization, while the differences between and within Muslim (sub)groups is considerable. Muslims have organized themselves along diverse cultural, religious, and ethnic lines, and these seldom comprise political aspirations.

To illustrate the relevance of the principle of the separation of church and state in relation to different ideological trends, we should take a look at the Protestant SGP (State Reformed Party). This party aims specifically at a Dutch government based entirely 'on the divine order revealed in the Holy Scriptures'. This standpoint produces in fact a theocratic party with official status within Dutch polity that elevates not the principle of popular sovereignty but a 'government by God'. It excludes women from having certain voting rights because of an alleged conflict with what a woman's 'calling' is. In September 2001, the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women called for legal measures against this discrimination. Still, the government persists since 1991 in its view that discrimination against women should be weighed against other rights pertaining to the foundations of the Dutch legal system – freedom to gather, religious freedom, and free speech. A prohibition can only be set when there is a 'systematic, very severe disturbance of the democratic process'.

This is somewhat surprising in light of the prohibition declaration by the highest Turkish judge of the Turkish Welfare Party, whose judgment is maintained by the European Court of Human Rights. The focus of the activities of the Welfare Party is supposed to be the elimination of the separation of church and state.[2]

If the Dutch criterion of a 'very serious disturbance of the democratic process' does not work for the SGP, for which Islamic organization could it possibly work? The link in public debates between wearing headscarves or the nonsensical remarks of some imams (e.g. on homosexuality) and the separation of church and state lacks credibility and is inconsequent.

None of this means that Islamic religious diversity resulting from the arrival of immigrants, refugees, and converts does not present the government with problems. The discussion over issues like wearing headscarves in school, at work, or even in court is not primarily about the separation of church and state but about basic civil rights. In these considerations, meanings for Muslims and non-Muslims are often diametrically opposed. For instance, non-Muslims cannot seem to accept that progressive views can very well be combined with a strong degree of religiosity, or that for some girls the headscarf is a means to emancipation and participation.[3] A forced secularization of Muslims does, on the contrary, conflict with the separation of church and state. After all, giving preference to secularism equals favouring ideological truths.

Foundations of citizenship

The real problem lies in the fact that the Netherlands has no consequent policy regarding philosophies of life. All kinds of arguments are thrown into the pile. The policy or the approach is often a question of taste, of understanding. The essence of a state under the rule of law, particularly the protection of individual freedom, plays too marginal a role. Behind every Muslim is an individual: child or adult, man or woman, traditional or progressive, ailing or healthy, lonely, enthusiastic, expressive – you name it. Giving space to the reality and truth of that individual is important, and experience has taught us that repressed identities are more likely to develop into extremist variants. The uninvited construing of or emphasis on 'the' Islamic identity of Muslims in a hostile (or friendly) environment is what leads to a distancing from Dutch society. This Islamic identity is confirmed as a reaction to alienation and social exclusion.[4] It is this alienation that is threatening in the long term. Many individuals – not only Muslims – no longer feel at home in the Dutch state, and feel unprotected against an indiscriminate government. Dutch Muslims and their children deserve the chance to make a free choice in becoming citizens of the Dutch democratic state, and the chance is theirs for the taking.

The real question concerns what the foundations should be of a Dutch citizenship with an Islamic identity. The philosopher of law Marlies Galenkamp points in this context to the harm principle of the philosopher J.S. Mill. The government can only interfere with the freedom of the (Islamic) citizen if s/he causes damage to other citizens. On the basis of this principle, Muslims can maintain their own religious views unless they cause damage to others, including those within their own community. A Muslim may therefore not discriminate, because that hurts others. A Muslim can step out of the community if he disagrees with certain views, such as female circumcision or forced marriages. This comes closer to the perspective of individual freedom supported by the foundations of the democratic state. Collective thinking is relegated in order to guarantee the freedom of all citizens.

The essence of such a state is not to 'drill' people, but to protect them against the omnipotence of the government. From this principled choice for individual freedom, Muslims must also be actively protected against undesired interference by foreign powers. Protective notions also call for alertness when signing agreements with countries in which Islam is the state religion. One should keep in mind that, under certain circumstances, foreign laws can also be applied to Muslim citizens in the Netherlands on the basis of private international law.

A consequence of alienation is that, in their isolation, Muslims try to solve their own problems outside the law of the state. Transparency is needed to guarantee the freedom of Muslim citizens. For example, a non-registered imam marriage can have negative consequences, such as an increase in polygamy. Muslims have to be protected against alienation, because the state under the rule of law is a guarantee and not a threat. The state belongs to everyone.

Notes

1. J.D.J. Waardenburg, 'Institutionele vormgevingen van de Islam in Nederland gezien in Europees perspectief', *WRR* Werkdocument W 118 (The Hague, May 2001), 30.
2. Case of Refah Partisi (Welfare Party) and others v. Turkey, Applications, nos. 41340/89, 41343/98, 41342/98, 41344/98 of 31 July 2001.
3. B. Parekh, 'A Varied Moral World', in S.M. Okin, *Is Multiculturalism Bad for Women?* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999).
4. F. Dasseto, 'The New European Islam', in S. Ferrari and A. Bradney (eds), *Islam and European Legal Systems* (Dartmouth: Ashgate, 2000).

Sadik Harchaoui is affiliated with the Willem Pompe Institute for Criminal Law and Criminology and is a deputy public prosecutor, the Netherlands.

Link: http://www.realpatidar.com/library
email: mail@realpatidar.com

https://archive.org/details/bk375/page/n14/mode/1up

2002-12 -The Tale of Hidden Pir -ISIM (375)

France
AGATHE PETIT

Dying a Senegalese Muslim in Migration

The occurrence of death in an immigrant situation is a little-explored albeit essential subject considering, for example, the presence in France of a substantial immigrant population, now largely settled, of people working and living – but also dying – in France. To study funerary practices in such circumstances is to consider the entirety of social behaviours that are caused by a migrant's death in migration. The question of death is approached here from a dual perspective: that of the choice of place for the grave (France or in the country of origin), and that of the funerary practices (what migrants actually do when a death occurs in France). It is situated at a crossing of two issues, that of the migration process and that of death, its representations, and related practices.

PHOTO: AGATHE PETIT, 2000

Muslim section of the St. Pierre cemetery, Marseille.

Currently the mortality rate among the population of immigrants in France from the Senegal River region is still low due to the relatively recent character of this migratory wave,[1] its demographic structure, and the re-emigration of certain migrants. Nonetheless, the question of death in France is present in the minds of the migrants.

The migrants feel a real fear with respect to the idea of passing away in France, far from their own people, in a place where the beliefs and practices related to death are profoundly different. Death in migration is particularly troublesome for those who maintain the idea of returning to their countries of origin. There is a sentiment of shame and guilt at the idea of dying in a situation that does not conform to the initial migratory plan or to orthodoxy.

To be buried in a far away land is to risk being forgotten, not being eternalized. Death in France is thus also synonymous with social death for the deceased, who is not assured of the perpetuation of his memory amongst the community of the living.

For Muslims, the will to pass away among one's own people, in one's land of origin, land of Islam, is coupled by the awareness of not being able to respect Islamic prescriptions in the case of being buried in France. In effect, the creation of burial places reserved for Muslims is contradictory to the principles of laicity and neutrality of cemeteries, stipulated in the code of districts. Two circulars (1975 and 1991) offer, however, to the mayors and cemetery administrators the possibility of providing for specific confessional spaces. Nonetheless, the legal burial conditions do not respect the entirety of prescriptions, such as being buried directly in the ground in a shroud. In addition, long-term burial in France is a paid act (burial plots being leased for a fixed number of years), submitted to constraining legislation, and is not always possible in the Muslim sections. This precariousness of the grave is a major obstacle and constitutes a fundamental divergence from the practices carried out in the regions of origin.

The death of an emigrant is experienced as a dramatic rupture by the family in the country of origin because it symbolizes the loss of often substantial revenue, threatens the familial equilibrium, and necessitates a social and economic reorganization, especially in the Senegal River region where immigration is aimed at reproducing the family unit.

Migrating to France, where the places of death, the rites, and emotional, symbolic, material, and financial management take on new forms, severely brings into question the serenity with which Muslims relate to death. For Muslim migrants, dying in France represents a transgression. These negative representations have a direct impact on determining the place of burial.

Choosing a place of burial

When a migrant dies in France, there are two principle possibilities for the place of burial: in France, according to the current legislation, or in the country of origin, after the body is repatriated. Surveys carried out have clearly revealed the preference of migrants from the Senegal River region for posthumous repatriation. Apart from exceptions, those who die in France are buried in the country of origin. However, this practice is relatively recent, the first repatriation of this sort dating to 1984. Before then, the deceased were buried in France. In some twenty years, the practices and representations have thus considerably evolved.

These developments are the result of the conjunction of several factors: on the one hand, the awareness of the burial methods, of the precariousness of burial in France, and of the procedure of rotation of tombs in the Muslim spaces, which is expressed through a 'conspiracy myth' that was rapidly propagated throughout the group; and on the other hand, the establishment of a 'fund for the dead', an association of people from the Senegal River region who finance the costly operation (more than 4000 Euro) of posthumous repatriation and which functions as a repatriation insurance. But the developments are also due to a return to 'the religious' in the early 1980s, coupled with the change in inscription of migrants in French space that followed the modification of policies and migratory discourses. Finally, there was the familiarization of certain migrants with the functioning of procedures in the host country.

The migrants from the Senegal River region refer to their religious adherence and to their return to the native land to justify their preference for post-mortem repatriation. The choice in favour of this reveals reservations about French burial methods, which are considered as an infringement of the Islamic prescriptions, and thus of their Muslim identity, but also an imagining that associates death in migration with negative representations and especially with a failure of the migratory project – centred on the return to the village – and a negation of one's origins.

In fact, there exist different levels of justification and a plurality of causes that are articulated in a complex fashion and explain the divergences in position both between the groups of migrants and among these groups. Religious adherence, financial capacity, the ties with the country of origin, and the individual, familial, and migratory situation are all motives that influence the choice of burial place in migration. Thus, a growing number of Maghrebi immigrants today wish to be buried in France, close to their children, and they demand the creation of burial places in which the Islamic principles can be respected. It is rare for natives of the Senegal River region to follow this path. But it can be expected that changes will occur with respect to this position in the years to come.

Transnationalization of the rituals

The migratory context and the repatriation of corpses are both constraints that affect the ritual practices of migrants living in France. They hinder any identical reproduction of rituals carried out in the regions of origin and profoundly disturb the sequential unfolding of funerals. These rituals are played out on a particular register that confronts several models, several cultures, several 'space-times' (here and there, before and after the transfer), and several groups. They imply the defining of new practices, new symbols adapted to a new situation: life in France.

The original practices are never totally abandoned. The inspiration of funerary rites of Malekite Muslims remain and the practice of the ritual gifts (in money) continues to be a central element in the ceremonial activity. However, the funerals are in part recomposed, or reconstructed. For example, the rite is sectioned: in France, the ritual is limited to prayer and the cleansing and preparing of the body, followed by the repatriation of the corpse; the second part of the rite, the burial and commemorative ceremonies, takes place in the village or region of origin. In this context, the person accompanying the coffin becomes central. Spokesman for the immigrant community, this close family member takes the opposite journey of the one he is accompanying, carries money collected during the offering of condolences, and oversees the proper carrying out of the rituals. When he returns, he recounts the ceremonies undertaken by the village community. He is the 'relay-person' between the actors here and there, serving as a bridge between the different space-times of the funeral.

The funerary devices in migration bring together an imperative of continuity and affiliation to the revisions and reconstructions that can be interpreted simultaneously as alterations of the rite (less funerary sociability due to lack of place or to the rules and norms of the host society), resistance to the professionalization of death (preparation of the corpse), the re-arrangement of roles (the most elderly are called upon, eventually outside of the family group), and even innovations (generalized practice of 'delegations', new role of women and non-customary social and friendship networks, and the splitting up of ritual sequences).

Finally, it is appropriate to re-examine the tie often established between funerary practices and integration of immigrants in France.[2] By analysing the practices through the prism of integration, the approach is centred on a dichotomized opposition between here and there, between identity and alterity. However, it seems necessary to envisage the issue of the migratory process in other terms. By posthumous repatriation the funerary practices in migration largely exceed this opposition. They are situated both here and there, between here and there, and invest the entire migratory field. It is not a question of alternative and rupture but rather of contact, continuity, and complimentarity. Funerary practices of migrants are situated in an 'in-between', which characterizes these migrations. They witness the establishing of a system of material and symbolic exchanges between the migrants and their village and family of origin.

The funerary practices celebrate a transnational culture and integrate themselves in a culture of mobility and 'in-between-ness', which very well expresses continuity in the rupture. The issue of dying far away is thus an excellent means to analysing in a dynamic way the migratory process, its challenges, and the construction of cultural and ritual practices in migration.

Notes

1. The majority of them arrived in France between the 1950s and the early 1970s.
2. See the work of Y. Chaïb (1992, 2000) and M. Tribalat (1995).

Agathe Petit, social anthropologist and ethnologist, received her Ph.D. at the EHESS with a dissertation entitled 'La mort au loin. Les pratiques funéraires des migrants africains en France' (Death Far Away: Funerary Practices of African Migrants in France). E-mail: petit.agathe@wanadoo.fr

Link: http://www.realpatidar.com/library
email: mail@realpatidar.com

https://archive.org/details/bk375/page/n15/mode/1up

2002-12 -The Tale of Hidden Pir -ISIM (375)

North America
MINIYA CHATTERJI

The Shiʿa Imami Ismaʿili Community in Canada

For almost thirty years, the Shiʿa Imami Ismaʿili community in Canada has been remarkably active and diverse in terms of countries of origin, ethnicities, and languages. However, at issue is the backdrop of the Canadian policy of multiculturalism, which has incited assimilatory threats to the Ismaʿili collective identity, despite its role of establishing the community in its pluralism. The following deals with this paradoxical positioning of the minority Ismaʿili community in the construction of multicultural Canada.

The Canadian policy of multiculturalism, first promulgated in 1971, means that 'although there are two official languages, there is no official culture, nor does any ethnic group take precedence over any other'. In other words, the federal government does not see multiculturalism as a threat to national identity but rather believes that cultural pluralism is the very essence of Canadian identity. This protection is set within the provisions of the Citizenship Act (1947), which provides that all Canadians, whether by birth or by choice, enjoy equal status, are entitled to the same rights, powers, and privileges, and are subject to the same obligations, duties, and liabilities. Moreover, the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (1982) provides that every individual should have the equal opportunity to create the life that he/she is able and wishes to have, consistent with the duties and obligations of that individual as a member of society. To what extent this policy holds true in practice is a highly debatable question. Yet, it is perhaps this Canadian policy of multiculturalism that has played a critical role in both the establishment of and the threat to the assimilation of the Ismaʿili community in Canada with its many transnational linkages.

Ismaʿilis in Canada

Since the first influx of Ismaʿili immigrants to Canada, the community has established its own community centres, *jamaʿat khanas*, throughout Canada, and has also maintained institutional contacts with other Ismaʿilis and Ismaʿili institutions around the world as a transnational community. The Ismaʿili community in Canada itself is remarkably diverse.

Two broad groups, categorized according to origin, constitute the community. In the first group are those Ismaʿilis who first made Canada their home in the 1970s. This group traces its origins to either India, Pakistan, or East Africa. Those coming from East Africa are second- or third-generation migrants from either India or Pakistan. Consequently, the members of this group, often referred to as Khojas, are conversant in various languages such as Swahili, Gujarati, Hindi, Urdu, and Kutchi. More importantly, the Khojas share many of the same practices and traditions.

The second group is comprised of Ismaʿilis who have immigrated to Canada in more recent years. Arriving mainly from Tajikhistan and Afghanistan in Central Asia, with a small number from Iran and Syria, this group brings with it traditions and languages that differ significantly from those of the Khoja community. It was as a result of the recent war in Afghanistan and Tajikhistan that the community endeavoured to negotiate an agreement with the federal government to allow the community to sponsor a certain number of Afghan and Tajik refugees for entry into the country. Consequently, in 1992, the Ismaʿili community successfully negotiated an agreement between the government of Canada, the Ismaʿili Council for Canada, and the Ismaʿili Council for Québec to sponsor Ismaʿili Afghani refugees. According to the Council Member and Chair of the Resettlement Portfolio, the agreement stipulated that the Ismaʿili community would take full responsibility for the new immigrants for a full year, which includes financial responsibility for language training, housing, employment, education, and social and religious needs of the immigrants. Since then, further agreements and protocols have been signed by FOCUS Canada and the Ismaʿili Council for Canada with the governments of Québec and Canada. As a result of these agreements, approximately 2,500 Afghanis have entered Canada. Almost half of them have settled in Québec, the remainder throughout the rest of the country: Ontario, British Columbia, and Alberta, notably in Calgary and Edmonton.

Paradoxical forces

The diversity of origins of Shiʿa Imami Ismaʿilis in Canada is obvious. Two paradoxical forces clearly emerge: the community's affiliation with religion, and a (forced?) obligation to adopt the multicultural society of Canada.

When considering the Ismaʿili population in the face of plural cultures, several questions arise. Does adapting to a plurality of cultures mean integration into the largely dominant British culture in Canada? Does this integration into Canada's multiculturalism imply eroding one's religion? For Muslims in general, especially for the Canadian Shiʿa Imami Ismaʿilis, religion is what distinguishes them from 'the rest', the majority. Hence, does 'adapting' to the majority and 'adopting' multiculturalism mean forsaking their distinctive characteristic of religion?

Multiple identifications

A juxtaposition of religion and the situational reality appears. This questions the collectivized identities of minority communities like that of the Ismaʿilis in multicultural societies. Some adaptation and perhaps redefinition of cultures seem to be demanded. Yet according to some, 'integration' needs to be warded off because Canada is a multicultural society with a dominant culture ruling the roost. The concept of 'culture' is then problematic: earlier theoretical constructions of 'culture' were critiqued as homogenized, and 'identity' as fixed and allegedly anchored in discrete cultures. Today, in the face of massive social changes on global-local bases, perhaps it is no longer possible to continue to define oneself in discrete, definite, and bounded ways. Instead, multiple attachments encompassing plural and fluid cultural identities are desired. How then does the Ismaʿili community situate itself in this pluralistic multicultural society and how well does the society accommodate it?

It has been observed that in the English-dominated multicultural Canada, faith and leadership have emerged to bring the Ismaʿilis together. It is the Imam Karim Shah, better known as the Aga Khan (III) of the community, who has a firm policy on matters of diversity within the *jamaʿat*. His firmans stress strength in diversity and urge the members to learn from the diverse practices within the *jamaʿat*. Also, for Muslims, religious ideology can provide a common vision that allows its followers to look beyond their individual cultures. In other words, it is the religious faith, and not culture, which becomes the primary mode of identification. For example, the author Rani Murji, who was born in East Africa and traces her origins to India, voices her identification thus: 'I used to identify myself as an "East African Indian Ismaʿili Muslim". However, today I identify myself simply as a "Canadian Ismaʿili Muslim", and when pushed, as a "Canadian East Indian Ismaʿili".'

Within an ensemble of multiple identifications, religious identity remains constant as it holds a central defining value, collectively and individually, whereas the geographical, ethno-cultural, political, and linguistic affiliations are subject to change and adapt to new contexts.

Multiculturalism plays a critical role in the establishment of the Shiʿa Imami Muslims. Initially framing the possibilities for the external definition of the group, the Canadian policy of multiculturalism permitted the negotiation of the frontiers between the community and the host society. Continuing to do so internally as part of the process of integration of recent diversity, the policy allows for the negotiation of the inner fabric of the community. As we have seen, the construction of collectivized identities and their recognition were both complementary and contradictory. Constructing itself with and against the dominant host society meant differentiating the community from the majority, while affirming its right of affiliation and sense of belonging. And yet, inversely, it also meant weaving itself from within, affirming its own cultural, political, and symbolic content, without allowing itself to simply be an undistinguishable Other for the majority. Thus, Canadian policy of multiculturalism has in a way strengthened cultural bonds.

As the community has resettled in its new homeland, the threats posed by multiculturalism and its 'assimilatory' implications have led to the re-establishment of many of the institutions that were a dynamic part of the community in the countries of origin. As a result, the community has organized local and national councils composed of volunteer professionals in charge of many portfolios such as youth, resettlement, arbitration, social welfare, and women's development. In consultation with the imam, these institutions address many of the issues facing resettlement within the community.

However, some critics do question the nature of this facet of Shiʿa Imami Ismaʿili practice in Canada. This criticism highlights the fact that assimilation is perhaps a Canadian reality: critics question whether it is the conscientization of identity recomposition that allows for the creation of new hybrid identities in the Canadian context, with an integrative passage to English as the eventual language of prayer and of daily interactions both within and outside the community, and with sustained symbolic links to languages of origin, of their restricted use, rather than practical daily usage in all rites and rituals.

In response to these critics, it could be argued that the Canadian Muslims, including those of the Shiʿa Imami Ismaʿilicommunity, are losing the language(s) of their home countries. However, it would be a mistake to conclude that by changing their language(s), the communities are losing their identity. As noted earlier, it is faith, and not language, that is the central collective identity-marker (characterized by its multiplicity) for these communities.

Multicultural Canada does appear to ask its citizens to identify with the community at large. There is a need to be Canadian, for pluralism, integration, and citizenship require very careful balancing if there is to exist harmony and solidarity in a society where members are free and equal. But given the significance of human rights, multiculturalism, and the role of Islamic community leadership, especially in the case of Ismaʿilis in Canada, it is vital to emphasize the preservation of essential defining elements of personal and collective identities such as: language, gender, ethnicity, religion, and race; protection of the nature of communities without unduly burdening them; and allowing for differential identifications and permeable, movable boundaries, while supporting collectivities and emphasizing collective identities.

realpatidar.com

Miniya Chatterji is currently a research fellow at the Fondation Nationale de Sciences Politiques, Paris, France.
E-mail: miniya2@hotmail.com

https://archive.org/details/bk375/page/n16/mode/1up

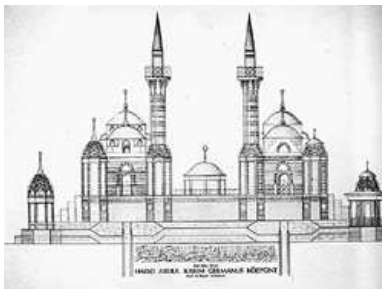
2002-12 -The Tale of Hidden Pir -ISIM (375)

Europe

GYORGY LEDERER

Islam in Post-Socialist Hungary

In the official Hungarian census of 2001, some 4000 of the country's legal residents, mostly immigrants, declared themselves as Muslims – conversion of Hungarian-born citizens to Islam still being a rare occurrence. Over the last decade, nonetheless, noticeable public and official interest in Islam has been provoked inevitably by the wars in the neighbouring former Yugoslavia and, of course, 11 September. Islam in Hungary demonstrates a unique path of development and specific responses to local and global circumstances throughout its history.



GÉZA FEHÉRVÁRI (1930)–

Unrealized plans for an Islamic Centre at the Türbe of Gül Baba.

Despite the 150-year Turkish rule over Hungary in the 16th and 17th centuries, later Hungarian public opinion was not antagonistic towards Islam.[1] In sharp contrast to the Orthodox Christian Balkan nations, many Hungarians expressed sympathy towards the Ottoman Empire at the time of the 1877–1878 Russian-Turkish war and then with the Muslim Bosnians whom certain Hungarian entrepreneurs wished to colonize. The reason for the Hungarian parliament's enthusiastic vote for 'Act 17' in 1916 – recognizing Islam – was the war alliance with Turkey and the integration project of Bosnia-Herzegovina. In 1918 the Kingdom of Hungary lost the latter dream along with two-thirds of its territory in which, except for the Ottoman occupiers, the number of Muslims had never been significant. The few hundred Bosnian refugees and Turkish immigrants living in Hungary in the interwar period were ignored by the nationalistic authorities. The long-standing idea of building a mosque in Budapest was also ignored.

'Act 33' of 1947 cancelled the discriminatory distinction between 'recognized' (such as Islam) and 'accepted' denominations (as Catholicism and the 'Israelite' faith), which had few practical consequences at that time. The socialist era was not, to say the least, conducive to religious activities. Practising Muslims, old Bosnians and Turks, having passed away – some having left in 1956 – coupled with the fact that their children did not follow their fathers' faith, meant that virtually no Muslims survived.

The Middle Eastern connection

From the late 1970s onward, thousands of Arab students resided in the country. They were allowed to pray in their university dorms if they desired. Most did not. Opening a house of worship for them was not given serious consideration, not really because of the atheistic regime but because they were not seen as sufficiently important. Socialist Hungary had excellent commercial and other relations with certain 'anti-imperialist' Arab countries. The project of an 'Islamic centre', including a mosque, at the Türbe of Gül Baba or elsewhere in Budapest, was cautiously raised several times from the mid-1980s, but to no avail.

Agrarian engineer Balázs (Abdul Rahman) Mihálffy became a Muslim while working in North Africa in 1984. He attended an unpublicized August 1987 Budapest meeting between a delegation of the Muslim World League, led by then Secretary-General Abdullah Omar Nasseef, and the Chairman of the Hungarian Office for Church Affairs as well as other greedy Communist officials longing for Saudi generosity. Mihálffy received the authorities' approval. He elaborated a statutory document and formed, in August 1988, the Hungarian Islamic Community of a few Hungarian citizens, mostly young females. When 'Sheikh-Chairman' Mihálffy claimed to be the sole Hungarian Muslim – as he often did in the 1980s – he was hardly exaggerating.

Although the Community's membership allegedly grew to several hundred in the early 1990s (non-citizen Arabs still did not count) it remained under the Sheikh-Chairman's tight control. Due to then Prime Minister József Antall's personal interest in Islam and relations with Muslim countries, Mihálffy worked for a while in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He then organized Arab-sponsored humanitarian relief and other shipments to Bosnian refugee camps during the war. In April 1996, following disputes within the Community, he was replaced as Head by Zoltán (Sultan) Bolek, a young convert with a college diploma in state administration.

At that time, the number of Arab and other Orientals of Muslim tradition residing in the country was probably close to five thousand. The proselytizing activities of a small part of them were supported and coordinated from abroad, mainly the Arabian Peninsula. The Vienna-based East European office of the World Assembly of Muslim Youth (WAMY) was perhaps the main regional source of inspiration, printed propaganda material in local languages, and funds. WAMY's Vienna representative, who had his network of Arab co-workers in Budapest as elsewhere in the post-socialist region, happened to be then Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic's Sudanese friend, Elfatih Ali Hassanein. He was also Director of the famous Third World Relief Agency (TWRA) providing the Bosnian army with Saudi-bought weapons in 1992–1993.[2] The breaking of the controversial UN arms embargo and the East European (re-)Islamization project were thus, for a while, inter-related. WAMY and TWRA helped the Muslim organizations of Hungary, the country's resident Arabs, more than the Hungarian Community. These Arabs created several associations and foundations in Budapest and the countryside (Arrahma, Alouakf, and Kibaʿa were the most important ones), also to justify the various grants they expected or actually got from the Arab world.

Two communities

In 1996, the Hungarian Community of Bolek received from the Municipality of Budapest a modest 150m² property (a former pharmacy) for ritual use in the 13th district. They renovated it with foreign Muslim financial assistance. In other Hungarian cities, such as Szeged, Miskolc, and Debrecen, Muslims pray in private apartments. In Pécs, they are permitted on Fridays to pray in the Yakovali Hassan Pasha Djami, an Ottoman monument still in relatively good condition.

The country's biggest working 'mosque' and proselytizing centre is in Budapest's 11th district: 300m² premises, with an inside upper floor, known as 'Dar us-Salam'. It is run by 'The Church'[3] of the Muslims of Hungary', which was registered in 1999 in terms of Act 4 of 1990 on religion, separate from the Hungarian Islamic Community. At the time of writing, Mohamed Abdulgalil Dubai and Mustafa Anwar, both naturalized Hungarian citizens of Arab origin, as well as the latter's Hungarian-born son-in-law Zoltán (Sultan) Sulok lead 'The Church'. It was created by resident Arabs, mainly students and young intellectuals, partly as a continuation of the Arrahma Foundation. Dubai edits a Hungarian-language Islamic periodical entitled *Gondolat* (Thought) publishing many translations from *Al-Europiya*, the journal of the Federation of the Islamic Organisations in Europe, and other articles articulating his and his colleagues' views on Islam and the society in which they live.

The number of the two (Sunni) communities' active members is not likely to exceed a few hundred each, while that of the immigrants of Muslim descent in general may reach several thousand if families are included. Public interest in Islam is limited despite the Balkan events of the last decade. Most Bosnian refugees had already left the country, while the Oriental Muslim asylum seekers (Iraqis, Pakistanis, Bangladeshis, etc.) living in camps expect to somehow get to the West. Hungary, after all, is hardly the place refugees dream of. The authorities have provided religious services in some of the facilities where refugees are kept. Their changing number is not included in the above estimate.

Islamic studies comprises the Islam-related field in which Hungary undoubtedly excelled. Since Ignac Goldziher, numerous outstanding Hungarian Islamicists have contributed to this scholarly discipline, not least the late Julius (Abdul-Karim) Germanus, well known for his conversion to Islam and his numerous popular books on it. Besides Alexander Fodor's Department of Arabic Studies at Eötvös Lóránd University, Róbert Simon, Head of the Department of Oriental Studies of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and Letters must be mentioned. The Hungarian translation and interpretation of the Qur'an is one of his most famous works.[4] No other Hungarian version of the Holy Script has reached its level of accuracy and erudition. It was nevertheless not intended for ritual or *daʿwa* (Muslim propaganda) use.

The *daʿwa* material printed in Hungarian is of varying quality. Increasing the local Muslims' awareness and providing spiritual and community services for them (as ritual slaughter for instance) are difficult tasks in an un-Islamic environment. The majority of today's Hungarians are secular. Two-thirds are said to be of the Catholic tradition; less than one-third of the Protestant tradition. In Budapest many are of Jewish origin. A considerable number of Hungarians have joined newly established religious communities and sects. Most view Islam as an alien body despite, or perhaps because of, the historical precedents. Non-assimilating foreigners and minorities have never been highly regarded in this still very patriotic country. It is in the interest of the Muslims to emphasize their belonging to the nation, something they usually do in a variety of ways.

Until recently the Muslims of Hungary had seemed to stand closer to Christian conservatism than to the Left, which won the May 2002 parliamentary elections. A few days later Bolek was re-elected Chairman of the Hungarian Community after he had been ousted from that post three years earlier. He preaches tolerance, moderation, and Western commitment, which are rather topical in the post-11 September context. His relations became strained with 'The Church of the Muslims' since the latter is not really pro-Western. Its review *Gondolat* is critical of libertarianism, sexual freedom, women's rights in a Western sense, and Israel. It refers to strict Middle Eastern ideals, while Bolek's Community of Hungarian converts, including one Shiʿi council member, remains far from that uncompromising spirit. The dire need both have for foreign Islamic funding may be their main, if not only, common feature. Internal dissent, competition, and altercation have always characterized both although things seem to have improved in Bolek's Community since his re-election.

As in other Central and East European cities, concerns have been raised recently as to whether Budapest's immigrant Muslim community could serve as a hiding place or logistical base for 'sleepers' or other agents of radical international Islamist organizations, which might recruit from among its members. If so, they probably take lower risks in Hungary than they currently do in Western Europe, where they have come under professional intelligence scrutiny. Hungary's few Muslims obviously feel at home. They tend to condemn terrorism, some of them, however, with qualifications.

Notes

1. Gyorgy Lederer, 'Islam in Hungary', *Central Asian Survey* (1992): 1–23.
2. Gyorgy Lederer, 'Islam in East Europe', *Central Asian Survey* (2001): 12–13.
3. The Hungarian term for church, *egyház,* probably refers to the text of that Hungarian law.
4. *Korán.* Hungarian translation by Róbert Simon (Budapest: Helikon Publishing, 1987).

Dr Gyorgy Lederer is a research associate at the Centre for Russian and East European Studies of the University of Toronto currently residing in Budapest, where he runs the ALICE Lederer Foundation, which focuses on dialogue with, and research on Muslims in Eastern Europe (http://alicelederer.tripod.com/islam.htm). E-mail: george.lederer@utoronto.ca

Text © Hungarian translation

https://archive.org/details/bk375/page/n17/mode/1up

2002-12 -The Tale of Hidden Pir -ISIM (375)

Nigeria
ALAINE S. HUTSON

Gender, Mobility, and Sharicᶜa

In present-day Nigeria there are twelve states that have adopted or implemented *sharicᶜa* law. These laws have spawned death sentences for two women accused of adultery. The cases have received international attention, including the boycott of the Miss World contest in Nigeria by pageant contestants upset by the sentences, and the November riots and killings surrounding the pageant's controversy. The Nigerian Federal Government has already intervened to help free the first woman on appeal and to promise to protect the second, and has denied that the pageant was to blame for the riots. However, thousands more northern Nigerian women are affected by *sharicᶜa* laws, which attempt to limit forms of transportation for women and control when and how they will marry.

Mobility is required for women to learn, teach, or work. International audiences are not addressing these seemingly mundane issues and the Nigerian government is not giving relief from such laws even though they affect the overwhelming majority of northern Nigerian women.

Sharicᶜa law has only been in effect for three years in Zamfara, the first Nigerian state to adopt *sharicᶜa*, but historically Nigerian laws based on the *sharicᶜa* in the 20th century have attempted to closely govern women's mobility and marital status.* *Sharicᶜa* laws promulgated since 1999 have attempted to bring moral leadership to northern Nigeria by limiting women's mobility. The first governor to institute *sharicᶜa* law, Ahmad Sani of Zamfara, has described the laws regarding women as essential 'in his drive to create … a decent society' (Phillips 2000b). Most of the restrictions on women's mobility have concentrated on sex-segregated transportation. States have mandated that taxis and buses be designated specifically for men or women; women's taxis being differentiated by pictures of veiled women on the side. It has even been suggested that though men now drive the women's taxis, women may replace them in the future (Phillips 2000a, 2000b). Women have also been prohibited from hiring motorcycle taxis (BBC 2000). Motorcycle taxis are a popular form of transportation because they are often faster than waiting for a bus and less expensive than a regular taxi. The fact that hundreds of motorcycle taxi drivers had been arrested for carrying women passengers and awaited trial in 2001 under these restrictions attests to women's need for this type of transportation.

These prohibitions come at a time of a petrol and transportation crisis in Nigeria. Since the early 1990s, the availability of petrol in stations has been frequently interrupted because of corruption and lack of resources. The nation's petrol drivers divert tanks of fuel to neighbouring countries or illegal roadside stations where they get inflated prices for their loads. Also the nation's four refineries are in need of repairs and are frequently inoperative. Recently the government has increased the official price of fuel, which will be reflected in higher transport fares (Ndiribe 2002). In the mid-1990s higher fuel costs put some buses and taxis out of business, which also jeapordized women's access to transportation. Transportation is especially a concern for single, divorced, and widowed women who support themselves through working outside the home or who go to school with aspirations for earning an income.

Marital status

The current *sharicᶜa* law movement has also tackled and coupled the issues of women's marital status and work. When Zamfara State first implemented *sharicᶜa* law, it offered prostitutes USD 250 to abandon their profession and take up small-scale businesses; twenty-seven women accepted this deal (Phillips 2000b).

States' *sharicᶜa* laws have made distinctions between married and single women. In the case of transportation, while the men bike operators were beaten, the *sharicᶜa* police did not beat the married women passengers. There were reports that unmarried women would be punished. The variance in treatment of women may indicate that the states have relinquished jurisdiction over married women to husbands; husbands' prerogatives override those of the state. It also seems to assume that husbands are the only ones entitled and trusted to punish their wives appropriately, and women are not to be trusted at all. This discrepancy in treatment also begs the question of whether Muslim husbands are under increased social pressure to limit their wives' movements outside the home.

Some *sharicᶜa* policies have made states into agents in the marriage process. Zamfara State was 'prepared to offer financial assistance to women who want to get married but cannot afford the cost of the wedding ceremony' (Phillips 2000b). And other state governments have attempted to legislate minimum amounts for dowries, lowering them from USD 500–1,000 to USD 10 (Dosara 2000). Women 'vehemently refused to comply' with laws lowering dowries. No doubt these women were attempting to maintain mechanisms for asserting their social worth (Cooper 1995).

However, there is some popular support for the notion that women should be married. More than 1000 women marched in a demonstration to urge the traditional leaders in the North to enjoin men to marry more than one wife so that divorced and widowed women could find husbands. Otherwise the women warned that the shortage of husbands would 'force them to commit crimes against Sharia law' (Dosara 2000). It is unlikely that these women were predicting the famous death sentences for Safiya Hasseini, the 35-year old divorced woman who was the first woman given the death sentence for adultery and then acquitted on appeal through pressure by the Nigerian federal government, and Amina Lawal, another divorced woman with a pending death sentence for the same charge. However, it seems clear that women and men in Nigeria believe that marriage protects women from certain allegations and punishments from the state, if not husbands' punishments.

Popular reactions to *sharicᶜa* law have again shown that northern Nigerians perceive the current laws as critical of single adult women and act in ways more strict than the letter of the laws. There were rumours in Zamfara that all single women working for the government should marry or would lose their jobs; the governor denied this (Cunliffe-Jones 1999). *Sharicᶜa* police in Kano, the lowest levels of whom are young violent men vigilantes, have gone as far as detaining hundreds of people of the opposite sex who were talking to one another on the street. 'The detainees have been taken to police stations over the past few days and questioned about whether they are involved in adultery or prostitution' (Phillips 2000c). Popular perception has influenced Nigerians to practise sex segregation in very strict and extralegal ways.

Education

The present state governments have expressed support for the education of girls and women. The first lady of Zamfara State, Hajiya Karimah Sani, has encouraged women to continue with their education, with the goal of becoming teachers, doctors, and nurses (Ikyur 2001). But with the laws governing transportation and the fuel crisis, women's ability to travel and work is constrained; therefore becoming teachers, doctors, and nurses – and getting to those jobs – is more tenuous.

State governments have also showed a preference for married women in their educational policies. During prize day at an adult women's school, the deputy governor of Zamfara noted that 'about 30 divorcee students of the school were now married and were comfortably pursuing their studies' (Ikyur 2001). When women's transportation woes are coupled with the retreat of women, especially divorcees and widows, into marriage as a refuge from some of the more harsh punishments of the *sharicᶜa*, there could be reversals for girls' and women's education. For example, scholars of northern Nigeria have long noted that early marriage is the reason most girls leave school in their early to mid-teens. However, recently many girls have finished secondary school and put off marriage until 18 or 20 (Werthmann 1999). *Sharicᶜa* law and its preference for marriage may stifle this ongoing transformation in northern Nigeria.

Paradoxically, then, the adoption of Islamic law though ostensibly designed to 'protect' women's rights and educate women may effectively impede women's ability to study and teach the scriptural basis of those rights if women cannot get to school. These laws and Nigerian perceptions of them will no doubt have consequences on all Muslim Nigerian women's personal autonomy. Gains for women may also be possible by making new professions in a sex-segregated economy, such as taxi driver, available to women and by making capital for small businesses more widely available. But the opposite is a more realistic possibility. These laws may just serve to decrease women's personal autonomy by preferring marriage and consequently subverting women's rights as citizens to men's rights as husbands.

At the beginning, northern Nigerian women and men showed support for strict implementation of these laws, but historically strict adherence to *sharicᶜa* has not lasted for long. Even today the dowry example shows that women can quash government initiatives that trod on their sense of dignity and worth. A colleague recently back from Nigeria reports that urban areas like Kano are no longer enforcing these laws. Public transportation in Kano has reverted to accepting both men and women passengers with some effort to seat women together. And when asked about women-only taxis or the enforcement of other *sharicᶜa* laws some Kano residents reply, 'that was during the time of *sharicᶜa*', implying that the time has passed in that city (Gaudio 2002). The sensational cases of Amina and Safiya were adjudicated in small-town and rural areas. These examples indicate that the continued enforcement of *sharicᶜa* may be breaking down along urban-rural lines. The nation's capital city, Abuja, may have the final say in these matters as the justice minister has already declared that 'punishment under the [*sharicᶜa*] system was discriminatory and therefore unconstitutional', partially based on sex (Vanguard 2002). The wide scale of the Miss World riots in northern Nigeria shows that many Muslims there will not give in to the Federal Government's notions on gender and religion.

Note

* During Emir Sanusi's reign (1953–63) in the Nigerian state of Kano, *sharicᶜa*-based laws attempted to limit women's movements outside the home, particularly at traditional celebrations, in order to stop the 'deterioration in moral standards', which the mixing of the sexes in public caused. These efforts were short lived but stringently observed for a few years.

References

- BBC News Online. *2000. Sharia Beating for Motorcyclists, 10 August.*
- *Cooper, Barbara. 1995. Women's Worth and Wedding Gift Exchange in Maradi, Niger, 1907–1989.* Journal of African History *36:121–40.*
- *Cunliffe-Jones, Peter.* 1999. Daily Mail and Guardian, *15 December.*
- *Dosara, Ibrahim. 2000. Nigerian Women Appeal for Husbands.* BBC News Online, *7 November. Gaudio, Rudi. 2002. Personal communication.*
- *Ikyur, Nathaniel. 2001. Zamfara Govt Expresses Concern over State's Educational Backwardness.* Vanguard Newspaper Online, *10 July.*
- *Ndiribe, Okey. 2002. Fuel Price Hike Latest. NLC versus FG: Eyeball to Eyeball.* Vanguard Newspaper Online, *16 January.*
- *Phillips, Barnaby. 2000a. Islamic Law Raises Tension in Nigeria.* BBC News Online, *20 January.*
- *———. 2000b. Sharia State Pays Prostitutes to Quit.* BBC News Online, *7 February.*
- *———. 2000c. Nigerians Held for Talking in Public.* BBC News Online, *23 December.*
- Vanguard Newspaper Online. *Sharia is Unconstitutional – AGABI, JUSTICE MINISTER, 27 March.*
- *Werthmann, Katja. 1999. 'Seek for Knowledge, Even If It Is in China!': Muslim Women and Secular Education in Northern Nigeria. Paper presented at Africa, Islam and Development Conference, 26–27 May, Centre for African Studies, University of Edinburgh, Scotland.*

Alaine S. Hutson is visiting associate professor of history at Michigan State University, East Lansing, USA.
E-mail: hutsona@msu.edu

www.realpatidar.com

https://archive.org/details/bk375/page/n18/mode/1up

2002-12 -The Tale of Hidden Pir -ISIM (375)

Fiqh al-Aqalliyat

MUHAMMAD KHALID MASUD

Islamic Law and Muslim Minorities

Presently, more than one third of the world's Muslims are living as minorities in non-Muslim countries, a fact which has posed challenges not only for the host countries but also for the Muslims themselves. Most Muslims perceive Muslim minorities as an integral part of the larger Muslim community, *umma*. Many insist that Muslims must be governed by Islamic law, often that of the country of origin. Home countries are expected to offer human, political, and financial resources in order for the minorities to live Islamically. This perception is quite problematic: on the one hand, it implies that while the Muslims have been living in these countries for three generations, their presence is seen as transitory – it cannot conceive of Muslims living permanently under non-Muslim rule; while on the other hand, this perception tends to imagine Muslim minorities as colonies of the Muslim world. Apart from the question of whether Muslim countries are in a position to play the role described above, other serious questions are raised for the future of the Muslim minorities.

Modern Muslim jurists disregard this methodological compulsion and treat the situation of Muslim minorities as exceptional cases that require special considerations. They approach the whole range of questions relating to laws about food, dress, marriage, divorce, co-education, and relations with non-Muslims, etc. in terms of expediency. Consequently, a whole set of new interpretations, often divergent, appeared. Some other jurists stressed the need for new, especially formal sources. Various rules of Islamic jurisprudence, e.g. common good, objectives or spirit of law, convenience, common practice, necessity, and prevention of harm, which were invoked sparingly, gained significance as basic principles of Islamic legal theory. These opinions were published in the form of fatwas and did not constitute part of regular Islamic law texts.[1] It is only recently that treatises have begun to appear on the subject.

Jurisprudence of minorities

Despite the growing volume of the literature on Muslim minorities, many Muslims in the West, especially in the United States, feel that the existing legal debates have failed to address their problems adequately. In 1994, the North American Fiqh Council announced a project to 'develop *fiqh* for Muslims living in non-Muslim societies'. Yusuf Talal DeLorenzo, Secretary of the Council, explained that Islamic law for minorities needed an approach different from the traditional rules of expediency. He illustrates this approach with several examples. For instance, instead of traditional unilateral divorce by the husband, the new *fiqh* favours termination of marriage only through the court system.[3] Taha Jabir al-Alwani, Chairman of the Council, was perhaps the first to use the term *fiqh al-aqalliyat* (1994) in his fatwa about Muslim participation in American secular politics. Some Muslims in America hesitated to participate in American politics because it meant alliance with non-Muslims, division of the Muslim community, and submission to a non-Islamic system of secular politics as well as giving up the hope of the US becoming part of *dar al-Islam*. They asked the Council for a fatwa. Alwani in his fatwa dismissed these objections and argued that the American secular system was faith neutral, not irreligious. He distinguished conditions in countries that have Muslim majorities from those where Muslims are in minority. The two contexts are quite different and entail different obligations: 'While Muslims in Muslim countries are obliged to uphold the Islamic law of their state, Muslim minorities in the United States are not required either by Islamic law or rationality to uphold Islamic symbols of faith in a secular state, except to the extent permissible within that state.'[4]

This fatwa stirred a controversy among Muslim scholars. For instance, the Syrian Shaykh Saeed Ramadan al-Buti dismissed Alwani's call for the jurisprudence of minorities as a 'plot to divide Islam'. Amongst other comments he stated: 'We were so pleased with the growing numbers of Muslims in the West, that we hoped that their adherence to Islam and their obedience to its codes will thaw the cold resistance of the deviating Western civilization in the current of the Islamic civilization. But today the call to the Jurisprudence of Minorities warns us of a calamity contrary to our hopes. We are warned of thawing of the Islamic existence in the current of the deviating Western civilization and this type of jurisprudence guarantees this calamity.'[5]

Responding to this criticism, Taha Jabir Alwani explains that *fiqh al-aqalliyat* constitutes an autonomous jurisprudence, based on the principle of the relevance of the rule of *shari'a* to the conditions and circumstances peculiar to a particular community and its place of residence. It requires information about local culture and expertise in social sciences, e.g. sociology, economics, political science, and international relations. It is not part of the existing *fiqh*, which is a jurisprudence developed as case law. *Fiqh al-aqalliyat* is not a jurisprudence of expediency that looks for concessions. Alwani argues that the categories of *dar al-Islam* and *dar al-harb* are no longer relevant today. The Muslim presence, no matter where, should be considered permanent and dynamic. The term *fiqh al-aqalliyat* gained currency in the Muslim countries as well. Khalid Abd al-Qadir was probably the first to collect the special laws applicable to Muslims living as minorities in his book *Fi Fiqh al-aqalliyat al-Muslimah* (Tarabulus, Lubnan: Dar al-Iman, 1998). Yusuf al-Qaradawi, who has written extensively on the subject, also chose this title for his works much later: *Fiqh al-aqalliyat al-Muslimin, hayat al-muslimin wast al-mujtama'at al-ukhra* (Cairo: Dar al-Shuruq, 2001) and *Fiqh of Muslim Minorities* (two volumes, 2002–3).[2] This latest book is also announced as a 'progressive *fiqh*', probably with reference to the current debates on the subject and the growing anxiety of Muslims about their minority status in Islamic law.

Another civil rights movement?

Obviously, advocates of *fiqh al-aqalliyat* have yet to answer some very complex questions. First, the term *minority* is quite problematic. Its semantic vagueness conjures up the concept of a sub-nation in a nation-state framework. Religious minority is even weaker than sub-nation or national minority because it is further divided into other aspects like language and culture. Second, the question of minority is very closely connected with other minority situations, e.g. non-Muslim and Muslim minorities in Muslim countries. Most often they are not perceived in the same fashion. Third, the situation of Muslim minorities in the Western countries also differs from the Muslim minorities in non-Western countries, e.g. India. It appears that minorities in these different situations have to develop different sets of jurisprudence, to the extent that the term *minority*, in final analysis, becomes irrelevant.

The problems addressed by *fiqh al-aqalliyat* are not the questions related to Muslim minorities only. They concern questions for the whole Muslim world. Some of these questions are certainly more intense and urgent for Muslims in the West, but ultimately the whole Muslim world has to respond to them. The West is no longer a territorial concept; it is a global and cultural notion that is very much present in the non-Western world also.

The jurisprudence of minorities, especially, in the United States has a further semantic connotation of civil rights. It implies 'help and special treatment for a community left behind'. Instead of absolute equality, it calls for differential equality and protection. This idea has been challenged in the US courts since 1989 and is losing sympathy with jurists. In the wake of the rising Islamophobia, discrimination and harassment of Muslims, and media prejudice, especially after the events of 11 September, there seems to be no sympathy for another civil rights movement. If the Muslims were forced to take this path, *fiqh al-aqalliyat* would not be there to help them because it has been so far concerned only with solving problems of (and within) Islamic law. It has still to work out problems with the local laws. There is perhaps a need for Muslim jurisprudence of citizenship in the framework of pluralism, in order to respond to the current political and legal challenges.

Notes

1. See for an analysis of the early phase of this debate, W.A.R. Shadid and P.S. van Koningsveld, *Political Participation and Identities of Muslims in non-Muslim States* (Kampen, 1996).
2. www.awakeningusa.com/public_html.books/s19.htm
3. John L. Esposito (ed.), *Muslims on the Americanization Path* (1998).
4. Fatwa concerning the 'Participation of Muslims in the American Political Process' (www.amconline.org/newamc/imam/fatwa.html). See also his *Muqaddima fi Fiqh al-aqalliyat* (Introduction to Minorities) (1994).
5. www.bouti.com/ulamaa/bouti/bouti_monthly15.htm (June 2001).

Muhammad Khalid Masud is ISIM Academic Director and ISIM Chair at Leiden University.
E-mail: m.k.masud@isim.nl

https://archive.org/details/bk375/page/n19/mode/1up

2002-12 -The Tale of Hidden Pir -ISIM (375)

Morocco
JAMILA BARGACH

Orphans of Islam
Family, Abandonment, and Secret Adoption

The question of adoption has been largely overlooked in studies of the Muslim world given that Islam officially prohibits it on potent religious alibis. Considering such a practice from an ethnographic perspective, and not exclusively a legalistic one, opens up new dimensions in the study of family and kinship in the Muslim world. Yet, such a practice is predicated on the existence of children to be adopted as 'raw material' in the first place. And while historically there have been, and still continue to be, various intra-family exchanges of children outside legal frames and the practice of Islamic tutelage, *kafala*, the Muslim world, as elsewhere, is experiencing the problem of abandoned children as a by-product of deep social permutations.

Cover image of *Orphans of Islam*: untitled painting by Moroccan painter Mohammed Nabili.

There is a strong ethical quandary regarding out-of-wedlock children and the practice of secret adoption because the contemporary codified Muslim family laws generally proscribe the latter and recognize the former within very limited legal clauses.

Muslim family law continues to be one of the most controversial and hotly debated issues in the Muslim world today, and despite decades of debate concerning its use and adaptability (or lack thereof) to the changes of the modern world, no consensus has been arrived at so far. Such seems to be the normal outcome when these discussions are ideologically framed and interpret the laws as a depository and/or a vehicle of an 'authentic' Muslim identity. The situation seems to have even worsened in the post-9/11 world as those holding and promoting a conservative Muslim agenda have become part of a legitimate contestation politics against the largely negative image of Muslims in the Western world. Family law has been one of those elements constituting this passionate engagement because it goes beyond legal definitions, norms, and procedures, and taps into the heart of Muslim identity, culture, social cohesion, continuity, and values. It is, in a sense, an understandable move especially in the face of what some construe to be the continuing external onslaught of Western hegemony and imperialism, and the internal acculturation and alienation of the Muslim population. Those Muslims living in the largely post-colonial nation-states today who call for the adoption of a Muslim family code are also those who interpret such a move as abiding by strict (or at least laying some nominal claim to) religious rules and as safeguarding the authenticity of the culture in question. While those other Muslims who argue for a radically different family code construct their quest as one that leads to a more egalitarian social system, as one that is able to accommodate the social and economic changes (especially those of women) in the contemporary liberal system and capitalist economies, and finally one that fosters an emancipatory role of religion in general but does not dismiss it, as is often believed to be the case.

Legal code

The two entrenched readings of the role of a legal code sketched above (whether to structure or to accommodate Muslim social reality), constitutes the intellectual and abstract aspect of the debate in much of the Muslim world today. And while this positioning is essential for a deep understanding of the implications and interplay between Muslim legal norms and Muslim social reality, tackling a 'tangible' problem as that of children out-of-wedlock in a Muslim context reveals a bewildering paradox. Research that explores the legal-religious component in addition to the other dimensions of the social problem of abandoned children in a Muslim context, in the field that is, shows the extent to which this is an issue made of many and various interconnected layers of complexity. Much has been written about the particularly ethical orientation of a number of Islamic religious/legal rules, and one of its many examples has been the fact that Islam protects orphans in an unparalleled way. In all classical texts of *fiqh* children born out-of-wedlock (*laqit*, sg. *luqata'*, pl.), although not strictly speaking orphans, are considered to be free clients, *mawali*, and are entitled to all the rights and duties of a Muslim since the notion of *taqwa* (piety, among many other meanings) is what characterizes a Muslim and not his/her lineage (*nasab*) or wealth (*hasab*). These *fiqh* texts equally comment on the prohibition of plain adoption in the Qur'an (what is known as the 'Zaid incident', Sura 33:4–5) as one aiming to foster, generally speaking, a social order built on truth. Truth implies here the prohibition of fictive kinship ties that may not only alienate those legally entitled heirs but that could also lead to future incestuous relations deemed to be potentially destructive of communal cohesion because they could possibly lead to a *fitna* (disorder, chaos). The Zaid incident carries another decisive politico-historical meaning not often dwelt upon by traditional religious scholars, which is the issue of the Prophet's succession given that pre-Islamic traditions made of an adopted son a fully legal heir. The Zaid incident was an important historical rupture with the existing social order and the ushering of new norms that were part and parcel of the new faith of Islam. Outside of the specific elements of this incident, which in fact has structured the sense of family, inheritance, and continuity, the question of what to do with a fairly substantial number of abandoned newborns and children could not be an issue in the classical framework simply because neither the sociological nor the demographic conditions of the time made it a possible likelihood to be considered as such.

The case of Morocco

The radical economic and sociological changes that have shaken the Muslim world for the last two centuries have generated, indeed, entire regiments of issues and questions to be dealt with innovatively and seriously. Research on the issue shows, thus, that a purely legalistic and discursive approach to the question of abandoned children, *kafala*, and secret adoption cannot possibly be the panacea for dealing with this problem as it might have once been historically (and even this assertion remains questionable). Certain conservative voices argue that Islamic family code offers the solution, but in tangible terms such a reading is simply dismissing the complex reality component and hiding behind lofty ideas and ideals. On the other hand, considering only the reality factor without the sediments of the Muslim legacy that shaped this reality is being not only too utilitarian and positivist but also inattentive to the fine nuances in which a culture reproduces itself. Morocco is the case in point here. The issue of abandoned children continues to be stigmatized and taboo because of a myriad of reasons, among which should be mentioned the issues of 'unregulated' sexuality, the shame associated with it, and the anxiety concerning the 'chaos and loss of morality' – *fitna* – that the very being of the children engenders. The children themselves are believed to carry a sense of disorder and dislocation and are made to represent profanity; such is evident through the analysis of a number of cultural beliefs and practices. To underline just one point here is the fact that they are called the children of the forbidden, *ulad l'hram*. Religiously inclined people as well as secularists generally hold such a viewpoint to varying degrees. The legal provisions in place for the integration of the children either through existing care institutions or the *kafala* – tutelage or the legally accepted norm of adoption in Islam – as is to be practised today through the Moroccan family law, Mudawana, remains equally a very limited option as it dismisses important issues regarding a child's equilibrium and other family-related matters. Thus, if and when the issue of abandoned children is tackled in public space (notably through media) or in specialized literature, the discourse most often, though not exclusively, falls either into an apologetic or a moralizing tone while leaving important questions unexamined. Of these, the most revealing is the understanding of those objective processes at play (legal, economic, social, and imaginary) that create and define exclusion and marginality, and an analysis of the foundations of those very assumptions that legitimize these exclusions.

The research carried out on this issue gives thorough details and performs an analysis of the legal, institutional, and cultural mechanisms of exclusion and victimization of abandoned children as well as the problems relating to *kafala* and secret adoption. It becomes evident that it would have been ideal to translate that ethical and all-inclusive stand of Islamic *fiqh* in the general *mu'amalat* (deeds, behavior) towards out-of-wedlock children, but contemporary social mechanisms yield almost an antagonistic result. Abandoned children in Morocco, as is the case in many other parts of the world, embody shame and are often made to pay the price of this shame by being excluded in a heavily stratified social order. The normative paradigms upheld and disseminated through the social institutions of which the state is the *wali* (guardian) fail to address in tangible terms the problem of the children and those cycles of ignorance, poverty, violence, and abuse that have given birth to them (pun intended). While upholding the Muslim-humanist claim that these children are not to be ill treated because of their condition, the reality is that they certainly are, just because – to point to a sociological truism – religion is not the only component in the engendering of a collective identity and its cultural traditions. The children are victimized because the physical environments (shelters, orphanages) in which they are lack social recognition and often basic necessities; because the legal norms and the procedural rules in place make their 'integration' extremely difficult if not impossible in some cases (difficulty to obtain a name for instance); because the culture generally construes them to be harbingers of evil and mistrusts them because of their supposedly profaned blood (evident through semantic analysis of the language and court cases); and because they are not tied to a legitimate kinship or web of relations that recognizes them as trustworthy actors of and in a given system.

realpatidar.com

Dr Jamila Bargach is currently a fellow in the Human Rights and Islam Program at the Emory School of Law (Atlanta, Georgia). She is author of Orphans of Islam: Family, Abandonment and Secret Adoption in Morocco *(Boulder, New York, Oxford: Rowman and Littlefield Inc., 2002).*
E-mail: jamila_bargach@usa.net

https://archive.org/details/bk375/page/n20/mode/1up

2002-12 -The Tale of Hidden Pir -ISIM (375)

Middle East

SAMI ZUBAIDA

Religious Authority and Public Life

The image of the Middle East projected in current public discourses is one imbued with religion. Media consumers would be forgiven for assuming that the region consists of angry bearded men prostrating themselves in prayer when not shaking their fists and burning American flags, and shadowy women with headscarves or chadors. The region is 'the Islamic world', religion stamped on every aspect of its life and function. The 'clash of civilizations' idea, much criticized, remains a potent notion both in the West and in Muslim circles. A mythical totalized 'Muslim world' is opposed to an equally mythical unified 'West', with religion as the essence of the former and the main key to its politics and society.

PHOTO: ALADIN ABDEL NABY, © REUTERS 1998

An Egyptian couple strolls past a cinema.

We are talking about complex and differentiated societies. They comprise political and cultural fields with diverse forces and many contests. Many of the cities in the Middle East have been, and often remain, the locations of cosmopolitan cultures with features of originality. The cosmopolitan Alexandria of past decades may be seen as the creation of foreigners, now long gone, leaving a few architectural traces in a ramshackle poor city bursting with overpopulated slums. But this image hides the native participation in ideas and movements in that city and the genuine mixture of peoples and cultures that prevailed. The foreigners were not just a rich stratum separated from the natives, but comprised proletarian and petty bourgeois sectors, such as Italian dock workers and Greek shop-keepers, intimately intermingled with the native Egyptian urbanites. Cairo was the location of many secular and cosmopolitan cultural spheres. In the 1930s Cairo hosted the Arab music congress in which its musical luminaries, such as Muhammad Abdul-Wahab, argued about the musical renaissance not only with fellow Arabs but also with Bella Bartok. Edward Evans Pritchard was delivering his seminal lectures on primitive religion at the Egyptian, now Cairo University. Are all these élite activities that left the bulk of the population in traditional and religious milieus? Wrong: the flourishing film industry captivated the fancy and imagination of the populace, not just in Egypt but throughout the Arab world, where the current songs were on every lip, and where a faithful audience of urbanites from taxi drivers to porters memorized the dialogue of popular films and gave a running commentary to new viewers. Now this fascination with film is further reinforced by television screens in many homes and cafés, broadcasting soaps, sports, and musical entertainment alongside the religious programmes and moral homilies so characteristic of pious Egypt.

Where was religion prior to its political resurgence in the 1970s? Of course it was there, but in many forms and guises, mixed in with other elements of culture and politics. Of course there were the bearded men of al-Azhar, and different bearded men of the Muslim Brotherhood. The religion of the people, however, was much more relaxed and syncretistic, including music, song, dance, and even exotic substances often frowned upon by the orthodox. Popular rituals and celebration, such as those of the Prophet's birthday and the commemoration of the saints draw vast crowds to the present day. Popular religiosity also mixed happily with other elements of celebratory culture. It is exemplified in the popular song sung by Abdul-Muttalib: *sakin fi hayy al-sayyida wa-habibi sakin fil-husayn*, *wa-'ala shan anul kull al-rida yomat aruhlu marratain* ('I live in the quarter of al-Sayyida [Zaynab] (a shrine district of central Cairo) and my beloved lives in al-Hussayn (another shrine district), and in order to attain maximum merit I visit him twice a day'), which situates his love in the sacred geography of Cairo.

Modernity and secularization

'Secularization' is not necessarily 'secularism'. It is not an ideological commitment against religion, but a socio-cultural process by which religion becomes differentiated and separated from other social and cultural spheres, which it previously dominated. In Europe, the Renaissance, the Reformation, then the Enlightenment, and the scientific revolution all contributed to this process, but it was the revolutionary dynamic of capitalism above all that broke up the communities and institutions that enshrined religious domination. In the Middle East, the dynamic of capitalist incorporation was part of Western domination, and was telescoped into a relatively short historical span. A crucial peculiarity of capitalist domination is that it enters into the very economy of desire of bodies and psyches, offering an ever-expanding range of gratifications. These are not only 'material' but often 'spiritual' and intellectual: it engenders new and diverse forms of knowledge and imagination, an ever-demanding curiosity.[1] It demolishes the narrow horizons of community, of kinship, and hierarchical authority by providing means of critical knowledge of the workings of social and political organization. The new middle classes in the urban centres of the 19th and 20th centuries were and remain thirsty for the new forms of knowledge as much as for the material commodities feeding new lifestyles.

The consequence of these developments of modernity was the progressive loss and fragmentation of religious authority. Law was separated from its religious locations in the ulama and their institutions, and assigned to government ministries and courts with personnel trained in secular law schools. Codified state law was largely derived from European models, but even the portion on family law derived from the *shari'a* in most countries became state law under secular legal institutions. Religious authorities attempted to intervene in and control the new cultural spheres of media, publishing, and entertainment, but with only sporadic success largely confined to instances in which items in these spheres directly challenged orthodox truths. The ulama, however, largely acquiesced in the separation of the various spheres of politics, law, and culture from religion. When religious challenges to these spheres emerged the sources were more likely to be the Islamic militants than the establishment ulama.

The modern sphere, however, did not leave Islam to the ulama, but from the time of Abduh (d. 1905) had attempted to incorporate it into its modern discourses. Ahmad Amin, Abbas Mahmud al-'Aqqad, and Taha Hussein, among others, were Egyptian writers with European education and knowledge of languages. In the 1930s they all wrote books on Islam and its history, claiming the 'real' and pure Islam of the Prophet for modernity, against the obscurantism of al-Azhar and its ulama. In effect, these writers and many that followed them appropriated Islam for modernity and removed it from its traditional contexts of jurisprudence and authority. This is an essentially secularizing step.

Islamism

Islamism also appropriated Islam for modernity, but in a radically different direction. A central element in modern Islamism is the attempt to impose religious *authority* on culture and society. Central quests in this respect are the moralization of public space, the imposition of ritual observance, and the censorship of cultural and entertainment products. Whether in government or opposition (and it straddles both) this strand of Islamism reinforces social control and authoritarian rule and is much favoured by the regimes in the region. This quest coincides with a wider cultural nationalism, seeking the restoration of *authenticity*, which, as always, is constructed. The history of modernity, it is argued, is one of the imposition and invasion of Western culture and institutions on a colonized Muslim society, and it is now time to reverse this invasion by reviving authentic culture. The demand for the application of the *shari'a* is central to this quest. Given that the historical *shari'a* and its institutions are problematic and often irrelevant in a modern state and society, as the Iranian Republic was to discover,[2] the elements of it which are most clearly at variance with modern sensibilities (dubbed 'Western', but in fact common to many sectors of people all over the world) are highlighted. Thus so-called Qur'anic punishments of amputations, executions, and stoning are adopted by dictators and authoritarian chiefs (Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Sudan, the Taliban, Northern Nigeria), flaunted as Islamic. The irony is that these acts are described by many as 'medieval' barbarism, when in fact medieval jurists and judges imposed many and restrictive conditions on these punishments, and the high standards of evidence demanded by the *shari'a* were hard to satisfy. It is modern dictators who relish their application, both as demonstration of their religious devotion and justice and as intimidation and threat to political opposition.

Similarly, the veiling of women and the prohibition of interest (which means disguising it) and of alcohol become easy hallmarks of Islamicity, when all the institutions of state and society and most spheres of culture have clearly nothing to do with religion, but are products of technical and cultural modernity. One episode illustrates the hollowness of this quest for authenticity. A classic book of medicine by the medieval doctor and philosopher al-Razi[3] includes a chapter on wine and its medical qualities, finding its moderate consumption to be largely beneficial. The manuscript of this book was printed in the 19th century, then issued in many successive editions. It was only in a Beirut edition in 1985 that the chapter on wine was censored, the editor explaining in a preface that such discourse was inappropriate in a classic book of 'Islamic' medicine. The modern Islamic editor, then, imposed authenticity on the medieval heritage of the region.

Conservative Islamic attempts at imposing authority and morality come up against sectors of society now accustomed to personal autonomy, as well as the forces of desire, liberated by the processes of modernity, which broke up the patriarchal community. To Iranian youth Western pop and football stars are much more meaningful than *velayet-e faqih*. Egyptian students resort to an odd concept of Islamic law, that of *'urfi* or customary marriage, to co-habit with lovers without their parents' knowledge or consent, to the outrage of the moral censors and the press. Egyptian authorities, religious and secular, pursue imagined satanic cults, pornographic displays, erotic chewing gum (supposedly distributed by Israeli agents to corrupt Muslim girls), homosexual conspiracies, and errant authors – all in their tireless efforts to eradicate deviant and inauthentic cultures, products of Western corruption. This paranoid vigilance fits in well with the aims of authoritarian rule and a sensationalist press. But does it signal a losing battle?

Notes

1. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (Verso: London, 1991).
2. See my forthcoming book, *Law and Power in the Islamic World* (I.B. Tauris: London, 2003).
3. *Kitab manafi' al-aghdhiyah wa daf' madarriha* (1st printed edition, Cairo, 1888; censored edition under discussion, Beirut: Dar Ihya' al-'Ulum, 1985). See David Waines, 'Al-Balkhi on the Nature of Forbidden Drink', in Manuela Marin and David Waines (eds), *La Alimentacion en las Culturas Islamicas* (Agencia Espanola de Cooperacion Internacional: Madrid, 1994), 111–26.

Dr Sami Zubaida is a reader in politics, Department of Politics and Sociology, Birkbeck College, University of London, UK.
E-mail: s.zubaida@bbk.ac.uk

https://archive.org/details/bk375/page/n21/mode/1up

2002-12 -The Tale of Hidden Pir -ISIM (375)

France
MOUSSA KHEDIMELLAH

Aesthetics and of Apostolic Islam

Their long beards often contrast their young faces; they wear traditional Pakistani garb (*khamiss*) or more generally white tunics (*djellaba* or *gandoura*) that flow to their ankles, a skull-cap (*taguilla*), and perhaps a pair of Nikes or Reeboks. Rain or shine, they untiringly cross mountains and valleys throughout France and the entire world in small groups of three or five, rarely more, to propagate the message of Allah. For the most part they are French, mainly of Moroccan origin or more broadly of Maghrebi or African origin, and are called Mohamed, Rachid, Amadou, or Moustafa, but also Eric, Thomas, Patrick, or Didier. They are male, but are increasingly accompanied by young women proudly wearing headscarves and participating in the effort of propagating their faith. They are mostly between 18 and 35 years of age and live essentially in the French suburbs,[1] where the cumulated difficulties of unemployment, exclusion, and racism are predominant. They are the new converts or 'reconverts' (voluntary return to the religion of their parents) to Islam, the knights of conversion and of pietism, according to the expression of the Moroccan sociologist Mohamed Tozy.[2] These new 'flag bearers' of an apostolic and ostentatious Islam are all religious militants of the Tabligh movement in France.

In France, the Jama'a Tabligh exists officially under the form of a non-profit association called Faith and Practice (Foi et Pratique), registered in April 1972 in the Seine-Saint-Denis prefecture. Since 1960, the first groups of preachers coming from Pakistan began to travel throughout France creating adepts amongst the first Maghrebi immigrants, and demanding places of worship, which aided them in their aims, before pushing their activism further. Since the end of the 1980s, the Tabligh movement has come to include mainly the second, even the third generation of children of Maghrebi immigrants. The Tabligh is currently very organized and has developed local, regional, national, and extra-national ties. This fact is especially remarkable in its ramifications throughout such suburbs as Mantes La Jolie, the Quatre Mille housing estates in Courneuve, or Neuhof or Mulhouse in Alsace, but also in large cities such as Marseille, Lyon, Lille, etc. In Lorraine, the region that we know the best, Faith and Practice covers a zone of influence from the city of Forbach (Moselle), which is its epicentre, spreading from Nancy to Bar-le-Duc, passing through Verdun and Longwy, reaching yet other regions: Mulhouse in Alsace, Dijon in Bourgogne. This transnational Islamic network, the largest in the world, counts an increasing number of adepts.

image not available online

PHOTO: PIERRE VERDY-STF, AFP, 1997

French rapper Kery James, a convert to Islam.

Surviving by identity migration[3]

To understand the adherence to the Tabligh movement, it is necessary to look at the self-image that often prevails among youths that live in rough neighbourhoods, since they are joining this movement of predication in increasing numbers notably in the French suburbs. The social and economic misery as well as the segregation and discrimination at the workplace, based on their physical features and their housing situation, are just some examples of the violence inflicted upon them by a consumer society that places them at the periphery of everything: consumerism, citizenship, education, etc. This sentiment of racism is strongly felt by these youths, who already have substantial identity problems. Often in majority from African, Turkish, or Asian immigrant families, these youths had incredible difficulties in situating themselves symbolically in the host country in as much as the persistent ideas of a mythical return to their homelands lived on. This is true most notably for youths of Maghrebi immigration: 'I am neither from here nor there', as a youth from the suburbs north of Marseille told us. The result is misery in terms of identity and an absence of stable points of reference[4] for these youths, who thus develop substitute micro-identities.[5]

It is essentially in the hip hop[6] culture that they invest themselves, but also in delinquency, so as to access the consumerism from which they feel excluded by either deviant over-consumerism, engaging in sports (namely individual combat sports), and less commonly by studying. These micro-identities can coexist and even be in competition. However, the strata of these parcelled identities reveal an overall negative self-representation. It is often by opposition to a society of rich people ('suit-and-tie-ers'), that their self-perception is constructed ('cap-and-trainers'). The society that stigmatized them by signs (often linked to their national origins) and by signals (fashion, vernacular language in the housing estates, regrouping, way of being) also attributed labels to them, taken up as well at times by the media: sly-guys, squatters, zoners, wild-child(ren). These negative labels are born from physical criteria (facial features), geographic criteria, or spatial criteria (coming from a violent neighbourhood, deemed 'sensitive' – unemployment, social welfare). Little by little, these negative labels are interiorized and even proclaimed. An inversion of the self-presentation is thus obligatory. The youths present themselves voluntarily in conformity with the deformed image of themselves that society confers them: they present themselves as dangerous individuals, or difficult to access; they wander around in groups, speak loudly, and behave violently among themselves, with provocative gestures in public transport, or by exhibiting the signals that incite mistrust or defiance (pittbulls, shaved heads). But ambivalence in the discourse and the practices of the youths is striking: they hate the well-off, who are at the source of all their problems, yet they want to appropriate all of the emblems (name-brand clothing, fine cars, pretty girls), and they hate their 'ghetto', the housing estates into which they were born. However, to the question 'what would you do if you became very rich?', they answer without hesitation: 'I would buy the neighbourhood, the housing estate, and I would redo everything with sports fields and all'.

In short, it is in the hip hop culture that a certain number of these youths find their points of reference in this unjust, dangerous, and racist society. It is a response to the emptiness that submerges them: 'Rap is the last way to escape the emptiness; we all know that a good part of the brothers of the neighbourhood will never make it to university', sighs Method Man, one of the members of the Wu Tang Clan.[7] In this identity-void of the youths of the suburbs, the hip hop culture plays a role of 're-positivation' of reality: trust exists between the local representatives who recognize each other and hold each other in esteem, contrary to the general suspicion in the neighbourhoods. The self-image is made more noble and thus more acceptable. The appeal of hip hop and notably American rap music (with the west coast – Los Angeles – seen as libertine and the east coast – New York – as more spiritual), which is, in our opinion, the most important aspect, next to graffiti and dance, should be researched in terms of not only the appeal of America as the El Dorado of freedom, but also and especially the African-American music and identity references. In effect, the history of African-Americans has many similarities with the stories of the suburban youths: forced immigration, racism, political or cultural resistance, demanding of civil rights, and African origins. The prestige still enjoyed by the Black Panthers, Martin Luther King, or Malcom X is the flagrant proof of this. These confluences between histories perhaps leads to reinvesting the religious through the figures of African-American culture oscillating between music and religion: Grand Master Flash, Mc Hammer, Public Enemy (Nation of Islam), Big Daddy Cane, and De La Soul for rap notably on the eastern coast; Ahmad Jamal for jazz; Mohamed Ali or Mike Tyson for sports; and Malcom X for politics.

In France the figures of Islam in rap also play a role in what has been called the phenomenon of re-Islamization of the suburbs. Here we can cite the rappers who proclaim Islam such as the group Ideal J (Rohff and Kerry James, singers) or the singer Akhenaton, a convert to Islam of Italian origin from the group IAM, Abdelmalik of the group NAP (Nouveaux Poètes de la Rue/New Street Poets), Disiz La Peste, Sat (of the group Fonky Family), or the rap singer Wallen. Music often plays the dual role of media in the reconstruction of the self for the youths in these territories in which misery and deviance predominate: a role of horizontal media, on the one hand, between the cultures of either side of the Atlantic, but also vertical media between young rappers and the sacred. It is naturally towards a transcendence to which the youths often turn after having had a taste of rap and its multiple imbrications with religion. Despite its success, the group NAP, unique in its genre, is the only one, along with IAM, to ostensibly promote a verbalized culture of Islamic rap. Unfortunately space does not allow for elaboration on the subject of analysis between rap and religion in France and the USA, but we can note that rap has often been the highly present crypto-identity of the youth before being dethroned by that of the militant preacher of the Tabligh. There again the parallels between 'the preaching of the rapper and the rap of the preacher', as philosopher of the arts Christian Béthune put it, are telling. The sources of American rap are probably found in the same meanders as the preachers and other gospels or forgotten spirituals.[8] These sources in any case were the media supports for an uncertain identity taken on by the youths that we followed and little by little direct themselves towards the religious as a fundamental authority to manage their wandering subjectivity. This moment of passage from the profane (deviant, nihilist, or musical) to the sacred religious thus marks the end of this identity migration thanks to the religion of Islam, which becomes the ultimate goal, and predication according to Tabligh, the modus operandi.

Career in the Tabligh

The JHETs[9] often have known or have gone through the identity migration described above before finally investing further in predication within the Tabligh. A number of militants interviewed were adepts of rap music; some were even DJs or MCs in local discotheques or groups. Abandoning rap and music in general (listening, writing, or playing it) is more or less irreversible upon entry into the Tabligh. Through the process of 'religious professionalization', the transformation is carried out more or less cleanly. We can in effect speak of a 'religious career' within the Faith and Practice association. The militants of the Tabligh are initially recognizable by their sort of 'workers of God' uniform. It is a specific physical-vestiary aspect: beard, prayer beads, *siwak* stick, *gandoura* for the men, and headscarf for the women. It is a new way to present oneself physically, spiritually, and verbally, which is constructed in a society that, according to them, never accepted and recognized them. It is thus interesting to note that one can follow relatively precisely this 'militant career of preachers' by an original physical indicator: the length of the beard. The length of the latter allows for a rather precise traceability of the career in terms of engagement of the JHET in the Tabligh. The greater the degree of engagement, the more the indicator of beard length (seen as highly recommended religiously) increases, and vice versa. There are four discernible phases of engagement in the Tabligh religious career: first, there is a disorderly and disorganized life, often far from God in terrains of exclusion, without resources and without a future. The subjectivity is often fragmented and lacking in points of reference. Second, there is a religious progressivity that coincides often with a cohabitation of several identities, at times antagonistic: that of the dealer or the delinquent with apostolic Islam was the most remarkable – selling drugs to subsist yet frequenting simultaneously, and increasingly, the mosque and the Tabligh.

https://archive.org/details/bk375/page/n22/mode/1up

2002-12 -The Tale of Hidden Pir -ISIM (375)

Poetics in France

Realpatidar.com

PHOTO: PIERRE VERDY-STF, AFP, 1997

At a bookstall at the congress of the Jeunes Musulmans de France (JMF).

The third phase comprises an unconditional engagement where the militant is in a period of 'religious forcing'. He speaks only of Allah, of His qualities, of paradise and hell; his investment in the predication of the Tabligh is at its maximum. He undertakes missions that lead him at times very far from home, even as far as New Delhi, India (where the Tabligh founder's tomb is located), to Pakistan (Lahore and Peshawar), and even further away to, for example, China, the USA, or South Africa. The worried and regular opposition of families to reduce his missionary engagement are to no avail. This period of unconditional engagement in Faith and Practice ends with what Donegani calls 'intransigentism' of the convert; this initial zeal is taxed voluntarily by global society as 'fundamentalism', notably due to the physical-vestiary aspect of the JHET, the beard causing confusion between them and the televised images of radical Islamists from all four corners of the world. At this stage there is metamorphosis: the young militant cuts himself off from the world. Often he no longer watches television, no longer listens to music, selects his friends, avoids sexual promiscuity with women, goes out little, and prays a lot. He begins thus, like a hermit, to fast regularly, to consecrate himself to meditation, prayer, and study. He uses to his benefit the time allotted him often by his status as being on unemployment or as occasional worker, to improve his faith and his practice. It is a politics of ascetism and chastity, which is demanded and applied to and against the ostentation of consumer society. Concerning the religious criteria, non-consumerism becomes in this sense increasingly a means and an end, a veritable Islamic leitmotiv to accept the unacceptable of the life of exclusion that they once knew. The hyper-visibility is expressed by the body or the discourse during this crucial period of engagement.

Finally, in the fourth phase, the Tabligh militant often passes through a period in which he reinvests in society having found the capacity to go beyond the cleavages and to inverse the stigmas of which he was the object. It is the 'Muslim is beautiful' period. He finds the marks and points of reference that help him to have full awareness of himself and of others. He reconstructs a sense for himself by using a citizen discourse. For example, in the racist neighbour he now only sees an inoffensive creature of God, stray and ignorant, for whom one must have compassion, patience, and kindness. Also, social failure is seen as a simple ordeal that one has to overcome; poverty is seen as a good that prevents one from being tempted by over-consumerism. At this moment of rupture, to prove that they have finally found the median behaviour between religious zealotry and the life devoid of sense in the suburbs without money, dignity, and a future, the appearance owing to the 'impassioned faith' often transforms into a 'social transparency' in which the preachers no longer wear the traditional garb and shorten their beards – the proof is that they have succeeded in finding this difficult compromise between their own faith and the laws of the Republic. They voluntarily call this phase 'the middle path', a formula extracted from the Qur'an (2:143). They thus return, after a phase of physical-vestiary hyper-visibility, to the most common social invisibility by taking up studies, jobs – albeit precarious –, associative activities, sports, or even citizens' activities. Their engagement in the 'congregation' of the Tabligh can then become cool, even critical, or non-existent.

The Tabligh movement, however, remains an associative religious movement under high surveillance by the General Intelligence agency and the Direction of the Territory Surveillance notably since the Khaled Khelkal affair[10] in 1995, at the time of the wave of attacks in Paris, but especially since the attack perpetrated by two young Frenchmen in Marrakech in 1994.[11] The General Intelligence agency is especially interested in the most zealous religious preachers, who have gone for four months to Pakistan and India with the supposed eventuality of having joined training camps in Afghanistan. While Jean-Pierre Chevènement attempted to launch the bases of a French Islam representation,[12] the Tabligh remains under suspicion of instigating, in the secrecy of 'cellar mosques', potential Islamists – which remains unproven. Concerning the possible 'fundamentalism' within the Tabligh, our approach to the Tabligh field in France did not allow for finding conclusive evidence in that sense or demonstrating any deviation of that type, until the present in any case.

Conclusion

This new diasporic Islamic youth, socialized in France, is impassioned with spirituality in a Western universe that lacks sense. In this way the JHET believe they offer something positive to this globalizing society. The concern for respecting certain religious taboos and that for ecological aspirations (such as the quality of air, the sanitary quality of food, or kindness to animals) also exist among the militants; in that sense it is an interesting convergence of the religious and the modern. In addition, the Tablighis remain faithful to the principal of being apolitical, also very modern, advocated very early on by Muhammad Ilyas, the founder. This characteristic that separates the religious from the political may explain the long survival of this network, which following the example of the Internet – on which it is extremely present – has also managed to weave its web throughout the world. Our interviews also show that Islam is lived by the youths as a globalizing cultural system, organizing the sense of their practices by an Islamization of subjectivity within the Tabligh group. Engaging in 'this voluntary grouping of religious intensity'[13] allows subjectivity to reconstruct itself around federating ideas such as 'prophetic imitation' or the 'hunting down of evil and exhorting good'. It is therapy by a rigorous religiosity within an ascetic structure that inspires security in the face of temptations of the self, dangers of the suburbs in particular and the world in general. This structure preserves the torn identity, allowing it to completely re-socialize and to arm itself against the social evils (exclusion, drugs, delinquency). It seems thus to confirm that the passage into and engagement in Faith and Practice in France is a moment of transition for the socio-religious identity, an intermediary structure of re-socialization, which has as its role to reconstruct the self. It is the experience of an identity migration (hard life, delinquency, hip hop) towards a transcendence that pulls these militant youths out of their negative and monotone day-to-day existence, thus bringing them to a moral obligation. According to our analyses, Tabligh allows these missionaries to create bases and support for the solid subjectivation in 'the spaces of authenticity where unauthenticity is banned'. Locally, the former Tabligh militants, due to their symbolic religious prestige, often become privileged in certain municipalities since they know the problems of violence in the area – and this evolution has been confirmed. These young Muslims who have reconstructed a new subjectivity through the religious, are the new emerging actors in the suburbs and in the city by demanding a French and Muslim identity. Yet by means of the sacred, these youths have chosen to invest in this movement of predication and seem to have thus found their lost dignity of an identity that had been erring somewhere between the two shores of the Mediterranean. To conclude, we partially rejoin Oliver Roy,[14] who thinks that these young Muslims are not the enemies of modernity – as Western societies often judge them to be – but rather its products and, even more so, its effective producers and actors.

This article is based on part of the author's post-graduate (D.E.A.) thesis: M. Khedimellah, 'Des ténèbres de la foi à la lumière, la Jama'a Tabligh en Lorraine' (Paris: Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, September 1999).

Notes

1. The term 'suburbs' here refers to the French term *banlieue.*
2. M. Tozy, *Monarchie et islam politique au Maroc* (Paris: Presses de Sciences Po, 1999).
3. The term 'identity migration' is an English rendering of the French *transhumance identitaire*, a concept on which I have published and which I personally defend.
4. Cf. Farhad Khosrokhavar, *l'Islam des jeunes* (Paris: Flammarion, 1997).
5. Cf. Moussa Khedimellah, 'Rôle de la culture islamique dans l'histoire algérienne. Ses effets sur la perception de soi et l'altérité sur les enfants de migrants en France', *Revue Euro-Orient,* no. 4 (February–May 1999).
6. Cf. Hugues Bazin, *La culture Hip Hop* (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1995).
7. Cf. interview with Method Man (Wu Tang Clan) with Olivier Cachin, *l'Affiche*, Special Issue no. 2.
8. Cf. Denis-Constant Martin, *Le Gospel afro-américain, des spirituals au rap religieux* (Paris/Arles: Cités de La Musique/Actes Sud, 1998).
9. JHET is an abbreviation for Jeunes Hommes Engagés dans le Tabligh (Young Men Engaged in the Tabligh).
10. Article in *Le Monde* entitled 'Moi, Khaled Kelkal', 7 October 1995.
11. Incriminating two former young militants of Faith and Practice from Courneuve, Redouane Hammadi and Stephane Aït Iddir, sentenced to death in Morocco on 26 January 1995 and who are still waiting for their sentences to be carried out.
12. The initiative was pursued under the ministry of M. Vaillant. In this attempt, the Tabligh was consulted as one of the main Muslim authorities, among which figure the Union of Islamic Organizations of France, the Paris Mosque, the National Federation of French Muslims, and the Larbi Kechat Mosque.
13. J. Séguy, 'Groupements volontaires d'intensité religieuse dans le christianisme et l'islam', *Archives de Sciences Sociales des Religions*, no. 100 (October–December 1997): 47–60.
14. O. Roy, 'Quel archaïsme?', *Autrement* (special issue, 'Islam, le grand malentendu', Mutations series), no. 95 (1987): 207–13.

Moussa Khedimellah completed his Ph.D. at the EHESS, Paris, on the Tabligh movement in France. He is currently affiliated with the CADIS and the EPHE-GSRL laboratories, France.
E-mail: KMoussa@aol.com

Archives de Sciences Sociales des Religions

https://archive.org/details/bk375/page/n23/mode/1up

2002-12 -The Tale of Hidden Pir -ISIM (375)

Performing Arts

AKI NAWAZ

Fun Da Mental
Radical Music, Political Protest

The conflict over Islam and the West began many years ago and the ignorant viewpoints on Islam are historical ones. Since 11 September panic has set in, and from the rampant fear emerges the question of how such a 'civilized' part of the world could be so blind. Information is everywhere, from academia to the media: becoming properly informed demands no great effort. But ironically it does not matter how much you have in terms of luxury or financial security, as these do not equate to common sense. Such a void is not the monopoly of the West; it is alive and well in every society. What is wrong with Islam? What is its problem with the West? Why cannot Islam just be peaceful like all the other religions? The questions go on and the answers are seemingly in 'recycle' mode.

PHOTO: STEVE GULLICK, © NATION RECORDS 1999

Aki Nawaz (top) and Dave Watts (bottom) of Fun Da Mental.

We, Fun Da Mental, as a political music band, refuse to react submissively to the current crisis: not only is that patronizing, it is also a very colonialist, imperialistic expectation. Please do not see this as an obstacle but as a stance that just might equate to honesty and a perspective that can enlighten you on the complex issues. Fun Da Mental has never been about compromise.

From its inception the idea was to express our views. The group was founded more along the lines of Malcolm X than of Ghandi. We wanted to challenge: politically but also musically. There was this great artistic heritage that was neither acknowledged nor encouraged. As a band we decided that the music had to be radically different to, say, Public Enemy and the hip hop ethos, but should connect those interested in such music and attract them to our form and take. Inspired by great traditional Indian music, we also found ourselves gobsmacked by the integrity and experimentation from that continent. No wonder our parents had no interest in 'Rock-n-Roll' or the current contemporary music scene – their ears were far more delicate and demanding. They had been brought up on music that connected to the soul, their lives, culture, religion, and environment. Sikhs, Hindus, and Muslims all united under a political angst, which Fun Da Mental took to the stage and frightened the hell out of everyone… yes, even our own people. This was not what they envisaged as it would cause conflict. The English people suddenly saw in us the Asian version of the Sex Pistols and they also ran for cover. The press enjoyed us as we made for good reading, but they were totally opposed to our politics. Anything radical is not acceptable in the present, but when it is finally buried and gone, it becomes trendy.

Through it all we remained stubborn and focused. Those interested witnessed us engaging not only musically but also in debates and workshops, and at universities. Suddenly we were travelling to many countries, and the excited, alternative Asian youth was relieved that here was a band that made as much noise and chaos as Rage Against the Machine and Motorhead. The non-Asian youth was attracted to the anarchist rhetoric and supported us even if they did not fully understand. We visited Bosnia a few months after the war, where young people had been playing FDM amidst the fighting and we sympathized with them as they did with us. South Africa a month after the election of Mandela saw FDM terrifying the Boers with the '10 bullets per settler' statement and was accused of being racist towards the whites. Even white people involved in the band were amazed at the audacity of the Boers. Despite all this, and after five albums, we feel we have not achieved anything in terms of political enlightenment, but we have managed to shed our submissiveness to allow for more force and directness.

Indeed, we have baptized ourselves. The current events and our opinions show that we do not fear confrontation and are open to debate on an equal basis. Let me say that Fun Da Mental is not entirely a Muslim band. Our members come from many different backgrounds. Nation Records works with people who, like us, have many colours, cultures, and religions – or no religion.

The music industry in general has failed to engage with artists in an honest way and provide musicians the platform to represent their music and politics. At Nation Records the integrity of the music is paramount, whereas politics is an option for the musicians. They know they have a label that will not restrict them in airing their opinions. On the contrary, Nation Records encourages this. Asian Dub Foundation, Transglobal Underground, Natasha Atlas, Joi, Loop Guru, and all the others have something to say about the situation in which we live, all of them taking different stances. This attitude from the label has also made enemies and has forced it to operate in a very underground way. Shops have restricted our products and radio/television stations have been inactive.

Acts of injustice

There is a grave paranoia in the West, and what it does not understand it wants to destroy; any attempts to take a stance against its domination will now officially be attacked. History documents the domination and it continues on. If a culture cannot be subservient or a sellable commodity, it is a threat to the Western lifestyle.

In the current climate, we see a demonizing of over a billion people around the globe – something not new to humankind. But what is it about this religion, this 'Islam', that causes so much conflict for the self-elected 'civilized' world?

Islamic thought engages with society on a daily level and it would not be right for me to separate the two as that would not be agreeable to Islam. Islam gives each individual and every community the right to challenge injustice, whether it is in a Muslim country or not. Islam is a peaceful religion but only in the context of a peaceful and 'just' society. It embraces all, encourages to work for 'all' for the common good. However, if there are injustices then it gives you the right to confront.

Allow me to commit a sin for the purpose of explaining my observation of the unjust and ill-informed propaganda against Islam: let us separate politics and religion. Politically the Muslim world is in turmoil because of many factors aside from domestic political issues. The international stage is dominated by the West either in legal, economic, or military terms. How can one part of the world that is almost devoid of the most needed natural resources be in control of a part of the world that basically has it all? There are many answers and all of them are relevant. But what about the local people? They have now had enough of the domination of the West and its unrelenting imposition of its preferred leadership upon them. This has gone on for far too long. The West cannot not sustain its acts of injustice without some sort of reaction from the local victims. All empires must fall.

Surviving the rounds

Travelling with the band has offered a first-hand account of local people in many countries. We, as a band, go to absorb and learn – not to impose.

We who live and reside in the West but are not 'of' it feel the injustice. We cannot sit here benefiting from the economic security of the West without wishing the same for those who do not have the same opportunities. I often have wondered whether, besides the financial benefits, there is anything here in terms of attraction or spirituality for those who value culture, religion, and tradition. Would Western people travel to the Caribbean if there were money and security? Of course they would, just as they travelled to Africa, Australia, the Americas, and Asia.

All my life in the UK I have witnessed Muslim minorities never being embraced and even to this day we are reminded what status the system expects us to adhere to. Some do, and some refuse to entertain an ounce of it. The blindness of the injustice is unbelievable and this needs to be confronted. Day in, day out engagement in any meaningful dialogue is suppressed. We are allowed but seconds on the media channels to suddenly say everything we wanted to for the last 20 or 40 years. We are invited into the boxing ring for 12 rounds, both hands tied; in the 12th round one hand is freed, nonetheless we survive the 12 rounds.

The debates that generally take place are with people who have absolutely no knowledge of Islam. They pick up on the weakness and failures of Muslims as if that is what the religion represents. A religion cannot be judged by its followers but a follower can be judged by his religion. Islam cannot be questioned, only understood: this is the belief of Muslims. It is divine word, no discussion and no debate, only a questioning of how to understand it and act according to it. Islam covers not only the spiritual element of life, it touches every aspect, from science to nature, from capitalism to materialism, and most of all justice based on absolute equality.

But how can one who has rebelled to the maximum, and continues to do so, have no problem with religion? The Qur'an, once looked into, can reveal some very anarchic views and non-conformities. The problem in the West with religion is that it uses its own guilt complex and failings of Christianity (people have let the religion fall) to judge other faiths. Does this mean we have to have a perfect society? This is not possible, as the Word reveals. Islam is a test, not a dominating ideology. 'There is no compulsion in religion', as the Qur'an clearly states. So where does our music stand with respect to Islam? The best way to explain it is to highlight our own observations of mindless, manufactured, and manipulated contemporary music – the epitome of which is MTV culture. In a simple explanation, Islam forbids this (and other sorts of) exploitation.

realpatidar.com

Aki Nawaz is the frontman of Fun Da Mental and Nation Records. Influenced by the Punk movement, he is credited with being one of the main founders of the Asian Underground and the Global Fusion Scene. His uncompromising politics are a recurring theme in his work, from Islam to racism and everything in between.
E-mail: aki@nationrecords.co.uk

https://archive.org/details/bk375/page/n24/mode/1up

2002-12 -The Tale of Hidden Pir -ISIM (375)

Egypt
MARCIA C. INHORN

Gender, Religion, and In Vitro Fertilization

Since the birth of Louise Brown, the world's first 'test-tube baby' in 1978, the new reproductive technologies (NRTs) have spread around the globe, reaching countries far from the technology-producing nations of the West. Perhaps nowhere is this globalization process more evident than in the nearly twenty nations of the Muslim Middle East, where in vitro fertilization (IVF) centres have opened in nations ranging from small, oil-rich Bahrain and Qatar to larger but less prosperous Morocco and Egypt. Egypt provides a particularly fascinating locus for investigation of this global transfer of NRTs because of its ironic position as one of the poor, 'overpopulated' Arab nations.

Egypt was the first Middle Eastern Muslim country to establish a national population reduction programme through family planning in the 1960s. However, as in the vast majority of the world's societies, infertility was not included in this programme as either a population problem, a more general public health concern, or an issue of human suffering for Egyptian citizens, especially women. Nonetheless, a recent World Health Organization-sponsored study placed the total infertility prevalence rate among married Egyptian couples at 12 per cent (Egyptian Fertility Care Society 1995). Given the size of this infertile population and the strong desire for two or more children expressed by virtually all Egyptian men and women, it is not surprising that Egypt provides a ready market for the NRTs. Indeed, Egypt has been at the forefront of NRT development in the region, now hosting nearly 40 IVF centres, more than neighbouring Israel (Kahn 2000).

Dr Mohamed Yehia, clinical director of an IVF centre, holds an IVF newborn.

NRTs and culture

New reproductive technologies are not transferred into cultural voids when they reach places like Egypt. Local considerations, be they cultural, social, economic, or political, shape and sometimes curtail the way these Western-generated technologies are both offered to and received by non-Western subjects. In other words, the assumption on the part of global producer-nations that reproductive technologies are 'immune to culture' and can thus be 'appropriately' transferred and implemented anywhere and everywhere is subject to challenge once local formulations, perceptions, and consumption of these technologies are taken into consideration. Instead, it is useful to ask how third world recipients of global technologies resist their application, or at least reconfigure the ways they are to be adopted in local cultural contexts. In other words, globalization is not enacted in a uniform manner around the world, nor is it simply homogenizing in its effects. The global is always imbued with local meaning, and local actors mould the very form that global processes take, doing so in ways that highlight the dialectics of gender and class, production and consumption, and local and global cultures (Freeman 1999).

In the case of Egypt in particular, infertile women and men willing to consider the use of NRTs are confronted with eight major 'arenas of constraint', or various structural, ideological, social-relational, and practical obstacles and apprehensions. Some of these constraints – such as class-based barriers to IVF access, the physical risks, and low success rates associated with IVF – are similar to those faced by Western consumers of these technologies. However, many of the dilemmas experienced by Egyptian IVF patients are deeply embedded in local cultural understandings and practices. These constraints range from gender dynamics within marriage to local versions of Islam, which legislate upon the appropriate use of these technologies and thus restrict how test-tube babies are to be made. Indeed, given the daunting series of obstacles confronted by Egyptian IVF patients, it is remarkable that Egyptian *atfal l-anabib*, or literally 'babies of the tubes', are being born on an almost daily basis in some of the major IVF centres in the country.

Egyptian IVF landscape

In 1996, I conducted medical anthropological fieldwork in two of the major IVF centres in Cairo. In-depth, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 66 middle- to upper-class, highly educated, professional women and their husbands, the vast majority of whom were seeking IVF services. This Egyptian IVF research followed an earlier project on infertility undertaken with poor infertile Egyptian women in 1988–1989 (Inhorn 1994). In that study, in-depth, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 100 infertile women and a comparison group of 90 fertile ones, the vast majority of whom were poor, uneducated, illiterate housewives (Inhorn 1996). These poor women were seeking treatment at the University of Alexandria's public ob/gyn teaching hospital, which had widely publicized its opening of a supposedly 'free' government-sponsored IVF programme.

Thus, my work on this subject incorporates both a longitudinal perspective and a class-based comparison of infertile women seeking IVF treatment in the two largest cities of Egypt. It reveals how the treatment experiences of poor and élite infertile women differ dramatically by virtue of education, economic resources, and subsequent access to IVF, and how a time-span of a decade has dramatically altered the IVF treatment landscape in the country.

In the world of Egyptian IVF, considerable attention must be paid to issues of religion and gender. In Egypt, the official Islamic position on NRTs – manifested through a series of *fatwa*s issued from al-Azhar University since 1980 and subsequently upheld by the minority Coptic Christian patriarchate in the country – has supported IVF and related technologies as means to overcome marital infertility. However, in Sunni (as opposed to Shi'a) Islam,* all forms of so-called 'third party donation' – of sperm, eggs, embryos, or wombs (as in surrogacy) – are strictly forbidden, for reasons having to do with the privileging of marriage, 'pure lineage', and the 'natural' biological ties between parents and their offspring. Viewing the al-Azhar *fatwa* as authoritative, Egyptian IVF patients explain that sperm, egg, or embryo donation leads to a 'mixture of relations'. Such mixing severs blood ties between parents and their offspring; confuses issues of paternity, descent, and inheritance; and leads to potentially incestuous marriages of the children of unknown egg or sperm donors. Thus, for Egyptian women with infertile husbands, the thought of using donor sperm from a 'bank' is simply reprehensible and is tantamount in their minds to committing *zina*, or adultery. Egyptian IVF patients, as well as their IVF doctors, attempt to scrupulously uphold these religious injunctions forbidding third-party donation practices, thereby revealing a level of conjunction between moral discourse and medical practice that is not found in most other regions of the world (e.g. Kahn 2000; Nicholson and Nicholson 1994).

PHOTO: NOZHA INTERNATIONAL HOSPITAL, CAIRO, EGYPT

However, from a gender perspective, this religiously condoned privileging of biological parenthood has not necessarily been advantageous for Egyptian women, who are unable to solve their childlessness through either Western-style adoption, which is expressly prohibited in the Islamic scriptures (Sonbol 1995), surrogacy, or donor-egg technologies. Indeed, the saddest new twist in marital politics in Egypt has occurred as a result of the relatively recent advent in Egypt of intracytoplasmic sperm injection (ICSI) –a variant of IVF that allows men with very poor sperm quality to procreate. As long as a single viable spermatozoon can be retrieved from a man's body, including through painful testicular biopsies, this spermatozoon can be injected directly into the ovum, thereby 'forcing' fertilization to take place. Thus, ICSI heralds a revolution in overcoming male infertility, and its arrival in Egypt in 1994 has led to the flooding of IVF clinics with couples whose marriages have been affected by long-term male infertility.

Unfortunately, many of the wives of these Egyptian men, who have 'stood by' their infertile husbands for years, even decades in some cases, have grown too old to produce viable ova for the ICSI procedure. Because the al-Azhar *fatwa* forbids the use of ova donation or surrogacy, couples with a 'reproductively elderly' wife face four difficult options: (1) to remain together permanently without children; (2) to legally foster an orphan child, which is rarely viewed as an acceptable option, particularly among élites who want heirs to their fortunes; (3) to remain together in a polygynous marriage, which is rarely viewed as a tenable option by women themselves; or (4) to divorce so that the husband can remarry a younger, more fertile woman. Unfortunately, more and more highly educated, upper-class Egyptian men are choosing the final option of divorce – believing that their own reproductive destinies may lie with younger, 'replacement' wives, who are allowed to them under Islam's personal status laws.

Thus, the use of IVF, ICSI, and other NRTs has myriad local implications in Egypt and in other parts of the Muslim world. As suggested by this study, these local cultural implications must be studied by Middle Eastern scholars, in order to document both the benefits and pitfalls of the new reproductive technologies that are spreading so rapidly around the globe.

Note

* The supreme jurisprudent of Shi'ite Islam in Iran has allowed the use of donor egg technology. Donor sperm technology is also allowed, although the offspring are not allowed to inherit from the social father.

References

- *Egyptian Fertility Care Society. 1995.* Community-based Study of the Prevalence of Infertility and its Etiological Factors in Egypt: (1) The Population-based Study. *Cairo: The Egyptian Fertility Care Society.*
- *Freeman, Carla. 1999.* High Tech and High Heels in the Global Economy: Women, Work, and Pink-Collar Identities in the Caribbean. *Durham, NC: Duke University Press.*
- *Inhorn, Marcia C. 1994.* Quest for Conception: Gender, Infertility, and Egyptian Medical Traditions. *Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.*
- ———. 1996. Infertility and Patriarchy: The Cultural Politics of Gender and Family Life in Egypt. *Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.*
- *Kahn, Susan Martha. 2000.* Reproducing Jews: A Cultural Account of Assisted Conception in Israel. *Durham, NC: Duke University Press.*
- *Nicholson, Roberto F., and Roberto E. Nicholson. 1994. Assisted Reproduction in Latin America.* Journal of Assisted Reproduction and Genetics *11:438–44.*
- *Sonbol, Amira el Azhary. 1995. Adoption in Islamic Society: A Historical Survey. In Elizabeth Warnock Fernea (ed.),* Children in the Muslim Middle East. *Austin: University of Texas Press.*

realpatidar.com

Marcia C. Inhorn is associate professor at the Department of Health Behavior and Health Education and the Department of Anthropology, as well as associate director of the Center for Middle Eastern and North African Studies, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, USA. She is author of Local Babies, Global Science: Gender, Religion, and In Vitro Fertilization in Egypt *(New York: Routledge, 2003).*
E-mail: minhorn@umich.edu

https://archive.org/details/bk375/page/n25/mode/1up

2002-12 -The Tale of Hidden Pir -ISIM (375)

Texts

NADER HASHEMI

Alexis de Tocqueville and Democracy in Muslim Societies

Following the tragic events of 11 September 2001, the relationship between religion and democracy has emerged as one of the most important and vexing questions of our age, particularly as it relates to Muslim societies. Most of the theoretical debate surrounding this relationship involves a discussion of Arab and Islamic political culture, secularism, and the problems of separating mosque and state in Muslim political theory. A critical prerequisite for democratic development is the transformation of religion. This conclusion is implicit in the writings of one of the early theoreticians of democracy, Alexis de Tocqueville. What lessons can democratic activists in the Muslim world learn from his observations of the early American republic?

At first glance the relationship between religion and democracy seems inherently contradictory and conflictual. Both concepts speak to different aspects of the human condition. Religion is a system of beliefs and rituals related to the 'divine' and the 'sacred'. In this sense it is decidedly metaphysical and otherworldly in its orientation and telos. While religion may differ in its various manifestations, most religions share these features. It is precisely the dogmatic claim – for which religions are infamous – that they alone are in possession of the absolute Truth and the concomitant shunning of scepticism in matters of belief that makes religion a source of conflict. Furthermore, religions tend to set insurmountable boundaries between believers and non-believers. Entry into the community of religion demands an internalizing of its sacred and absolute Truth.

Democracy, on the other hand, is decidedly this worldly, secular, and egalitarian. Regardless of religious belief, race, or creed, democracy (especially its liberal variant) implies an equality of rights and treatment before the law for all citizens without discrimination. Its telos is geared towards the non-violent management of human affairs in order to create the good life on this earth, not in the hereafter. Critically, unlike religious commandments, the rules of democracy can be changed, adjusted, and amended. It is precisely the inclusive and relativistic nature of democracy that separates it from religion and theologically based political systems.

One of the leading early writers on the relationship between democracy and religion was the 19th-century French aristocrat, Alexis de Tocqueville. In *Democracy in America* he wrote: 'On my arrival in the United States the religious aspect of the country was the first thing that struck my attention' (Tocqueville 1999:308).* In the context of democratic theory, Tocqueville is usually remembered for his warnings on the problem of the 'tyranny of the majority' and his observation about the 'equality of conditions' in early America. It is generally forgotten, however, that he also wrote extensively about the connection between religion and democracy. His ruminations on this theme are not only explored in several chapters of *Democracy and America* but are peppered throughout this work. What lessons can Muslim democrats today learn from Tocqueville on the relationship between religion and democracy?

Tocqueville describes religion in the United States 'as the first of their political institutions; for if it does not impart a taste for freedom, it facilitates the use of it' (305).

He sees religion as a moderating force in the United States that exists in natural harmony with its democratic character. 'The Americans combine the notions of Christianity and of liberty so intimately in their minds', he observes, 'that it is impossible to make them conceive the one without the other' (306).

Tocqueville, it should be recalled, was not writing for an American audience but rather for the educated classes in Europe where the normative relationship between religion and politics was still unresolved, or as he put it: 'the establishment of democracy in Christendom is the great political problem of our times' (325). The core problem as he saw it was that in Europe the 'spirit of religion and spirit of freedom [were almost always] marching in opposite directions. But in America … they were intimately united and … they reigned in common over the same country' (308). Tocqueville concludes his reflections on religion and democracy by stating that while the Americans have not completely 'resolved this problem … they furnish useful data to those who undertake to resolve it' (325).

One of the confident assertions that Tocqueville makes about the peaceful coexistence of religion and democracy in the United States is its decidedly secular character. All with whom he spoke on this matter – including the clergy – were in unanimous agreement 'that they all attributed the peaceful dominion of religion in their country mainly to the separation of church and state' (308). Tocqueville invokes the absence of this separation in the case of Islam to explain its democratic deficit.

Mohammed professed to derive from Heaven, and has inserted in the Qur'an not only religious doctrines but also political maxims, civil and criminal laws, and theories of science. The Gospel, on the contrary, speaks only of the general relations of men to God and to each other, beyond which it inculcates and imposes no point of faith. This alone, besides a thousand other reasons, would suffice to prove that the former of these religions will never long predominate in a cultivated and democratic age, while the latter is destined to retain its sway at these as at all other periods (II, 23).

Tocqueville was simply repeating the standard view of what is now a sacred and unexamined equation: 'no secularism equals no democracy'. While there is no denying that secularism has been an inherent part of the development of democracy in the West, when applied to Muslim societies it encounters several theoretical and historical problems. Leaving aside the emotionally charged and exaggerated debate about Islam and secularism, what are the lessons here for the struggle for democracy in the Muslim world?

First encounters

The first observation is that Tocqueville is not talking about religion generally but really about a particular type of religion – in this case various strands of Protestant Christianity, three hundred years after Martin Luther, which had been transplanted into the New World because of religious persecution in Europe. The many Protestant Churches that Tocqueville encountered in his travels were largely anti-élitist, community-run organizations. Many of these institutions had undergone a significant democratic transformation during the early years of the American republic. According to Nathan Hatch's seminal work *The Democratization of American Christianity,* anti-clericalism, religious pluralism, egalitarianism, and the supremacy of the individual were core characteristics of American religion by the 1830s.

Secondly, democratic ideas and debates that flowed from the American Revolution and constitutional debates indelibly affected the practice of both religion and democracy in America. In other words, the enveloping context was democracy friendly and democracy enhancing. In most Muslim societies, by contrast, a different situation exists. The historic Muslim encounter with modern democracy has been a bitter experience. The late Eqbal Ahmad, a prominent democracy activist and dissident Muslim intellectual captures the point:

> *Our first encounter with democracy was oppressive. Democracy came to us as oppressors, as colonizers, as violators. As violators, they spoke in the language of the Enlightenment and engaged in the activities of barbarians…. Secondly, after decolonization our experience was again with the democratic power centers, United States, France, [and] Britain. Our experience even in [the] second stage of our post-colonial history, was one of these big Western powers calling themselves the 'Free World' and … actively promoting neo-fascism and neo-fascist governments in one Muslim country and Third World country after another. Historically the United States has spoken of democracy and has supported Samozas, Trujillos, Mobutu Sese Seko, Suharto of Indonesia, the Shah of Iran, Zia ul Haq of Pakistan…. Therefore, our first experience with democracy was one of outright oppression and our second experience with democracy was one which [the West] promoted fascism, global fascism in some cases. (Ahmad 1996)*

Not only has the historic Muslim experience with democracy been different, but also a strong argument can be made that existing mosques and religious schools in the Muslim world – unlike their early American counterparts – actually foster values that are antithetical to democracy and liberalism. A content analysis of the *jum'a khutab* (Friday sermons) in the major mosques of Cairo, Mecca, Beirut, Damascus, Tehran, and Karachi (not to mention most North American mosques and Islamic schools) would be profoundly revealing in this regard. Themes of popular sovereignty, political accountability, and (gender) equality are rarely if ever expounded.

Finally, the doyen of American democratic theorists Robert Dahl, in responding to the question of how a democratic culture can be created in a non-democratic society, observed that 'few would seriously contest [that] an important factor in the prospects for a stable democracy in a country is the strength of the diffuse support for democratic ideas, values, and practices embedded in the country's culture and transmitted, in large part, from one generation to the next' (Dahl 1999:2). In the Muslim world today, who is promoting, propagating, and transmitting democratic values, ideas, and practices? The ulama (clergy)? the education system? the media? the intellectual class? the family? (I am deliberately leaving out the state for obvious reasons.) The point is a self-evident one. To quote Ghassan Salamé, you cannot have 'democracy without democrats'. Tocqueville realized this over 170 years ago as he surveyed the political culture of early American society. Unlike Europe in the 19th century and large parts of the Muslim world today, in the United States, by contrast, the 'spirit of religion and spirit of freedom … were intimately united and … they reigned in common over the same country' (Tocqueville 1999:308). In his writings on religion and democracy, Tocqueville provides considerable food for thought for Muslim democrats to read and reflect upon as they grapple with the problems of political development that afflict their own societies.

Note

* I am indebted to Hillel Fradkin's essay 'Does Democracy Need Religion?', *Journal of Democracy* 11 (January 2000): 87–94, for stimulating my thinking on this topic, as well as the writings of Saad Edeen Ibrahim on Islam and democracy.

References

- *Ahmad, Eqbal. 1996. The Obstacles to Democracy in the Muslim World. Lecture at Carleton University, Ottawa, Canada (5 April).*
- *Dahl, Robert. 1999. Political Culture and Economic Development. In Trond Engelstad and Ragnvald Kalleberg (eds),* Social Time and Social Change: Perspectives on Sociology and History. *Oslo: Scandinavian University Press.*
- *Tocqueville, Alexis de.* 1990. Democracy in America. *Translated by Henry Reeve. New York: Vintage Books.*

Nader Hashemi is a Ph.D. candidate at the Department of Political Science, University of Toronto, Canada.
E-mail: nader.hashemi@utoronto.ca

Link: http://www.realpatidar.com/library
email: mail@realpatidar.com

https://archive.org/details/bk375/page/n26/mode/1up

2002-12 -The Tale of Hidden Pir -ISIM (375)

Texts

ASMA AFSARUDDIN

'Civil' and 'Democratic' Polity
A 9th-Century Treatise

Among the political theorists of classical Islam invoked by scholars today, particularly in the context of discussions on 'democracy within Islam' and/or 'civil society in Islam', the name of ʿAmr b. Bahr al-Jahiz (d. 255/869) is, to the best of my knowledge, never mentioned. Yet, his political treatises or epistles have much to tell us moderns about the conceptualization of the ideal Muslim polity and its leadership by the turn of the 3rd century of the Islamic era. One of his epistles in particular, 'Risalat al-ʿUthmaniyya' (The Epistle of the ʿUthmaniyya), deserves closer study due to its possible implications for legitimizing modernist discourse on the extrapolation of democratic principles from the Islamic tradition.

Al-Jahiz (literally 'the bug-eyed', referring to his protruding eyes) is regarded until today as the best litterateur ever produced within the Arabo-Islamic civilization. It seems almost certain that he composed the 'Risalat al-ʿUthmaniyya' during the reign of the Abbasid caliph al-Ma'mun (d. 218/833) and that it was among a series of treatises presented to the caliph on political governance by the courtier al-Yazidi (d. 202/817–18). This dating would make the epistle one of the earliest Islamic political tracts we have from the medieval period composed before the classical work on political theory by al-Mawardi (d. 450/1058). The ʿUthmaniyya is consequently the repository of much earlier layers of political and religious thinking.

According to the ʿUthmaniyya, legitimate leadership of the Muslim polity is primarily predicated on the individual's precedence in piety, on his election by popular consent and accountability to the populace. As far as the individual leader is concerned, he must be acknowledged as the most morally excellent of his time, possessing and demonstrating in abundance traits such as generosity, superior knowledge of worldly and religious matters, courage, and truthfulness. According to al-Jahiz, invocation of these criteria establishes that Abu Bakr was the best-qualified candidate to assume the caliphate after the death of the Prophet. His arguments are briefly delineated below.

Al-ʿUthmaniyya

©ʿABD AL-SALAM HARUN (ED.), CAIRO, 1955

Precedence in piety

The Qur'anic principle of granting precedence to believers solely on the basis of piety (for example, Qur'an 49:13) is central to al-Jahiz's discourse on just and legitimate leadership. In the ʿUthmaniyya, he inveighs against the classic Shiʿi position that legitimates leadership based on blood-kinship to the Prophet, a position that lends itself to the assumption of the genealogical superiority of certain individuals over others, which militates against this basic Qur'anic principle. He points out that God had assured Abraham:

> *'I will make of you a leader (imam) over the people.' Abraham asked, whether of a desire to know or as a request, 'And of my progeny?' He said, 'My promise does not extend to those who do wrong.' (Qur'an, 2:124)*

Thus, al-Jahiz affirms, Abraham learned that 'the covenant of his leadership and vicegerency' did not extend to the wrongdoer, even though he may be from the best stock of God's creation. In this is proof that leadership (*al-riyasa*) is concerned with religiosity (*din*) and does not extend beyond religiosity (al-Jahiz 1955:210).

Al-Jahiz then proceeds to demonstrate how the Qur'an's uncompromising stance on individual moral accountability is reflected in the operational principles of the *diwan* or the register of pensions established by the second caliph ʿUmar. Al-Jahiz painstakingly establishes that the Qur'anically derived principles of *sabiqa* ('precedence' in Islam) and *fadl*/*fadila* ('virtue' or 'moral excellence') guided the *diwan*'s organization, and that kinship, ethnicity, or tribal affiliation had little to do with its overall function (al-Jahiz 1955:211ff.).

Election and public accountability of the leader

If the relevance of kinship is thereby thoroughly discounted, then it is the piety of the caliphal candidate, as evidenced by his demonstrated moral righteousness and a track record of early and distinguished service to Islam, that makes him acceptable to the public as their leader.

Al-Jahiz relates that Abu Bakr stressed piety in his inaugural address before the Muhajirun (emigrants from Mecca) and the Ansar (their helpers in Medina) and discounted the pre-Islamic notion of *hasab* ('[collective] merit inherited from one's forefathers') as having any bearing on legitimate leadership. He is quoted as counselling the people gathered before him:

> *You must be Godfearing, for piety is the most intelligent practice and immorality is the most foolish. Indeed I am a follower, not an innovator; if I perform well, then help me, and if I should deviate, correct me. O gathering of the Ansar, if the caliphate is deserved on account of hasab and attained on account of kinship (bi-'l-qaraba), then Quraysh is more noble than you on account of hasab and more closely related than you [to the Prophet]. However, since it is deserved on account of moral excellence (bi-'l-fadl) in religion, then those who are foremost in precedence (al-sabiqun al-awwalun) from among the Muhajirun are placed ahead of you in the entire Qur'an as being more worthy of it compared to you. (al-Jahiz 1955:202)*

In this speech, Abu Bakr foregrounds personal moral excellence of the leader as establishing his claim to leadership and clearly indicates his accountability to the people who are vested with the right to correct him should he lapse into error. The assembly of people, according to al-Jahiz, was swayed by the cogency of Abu Bakr's arguments and proceeded to give their allegiance to him in recognition of his superior qualifications for the caliphate.

Individual moral traits of the leader

On the subject of personal traits, as mentioned before, al-Jahiz particularly highlights generosity, exceptional knowledge, courage, and truthfulness. With regard to generosity, he adduces as proof-texts specific *hadith* that testify to Abu Bakr's reputation for generosity. He quotes, for instance, the following *hadith* in which the Prophet says '[t]he most gracious of people toward me with regard to his wealth and his companionship is Abu Bakr' (Muslim 1995:7:108).

He further points out that only Abu Bakr, in recognition of his truthful nature, was regularly called al-Siddiq (the Veracious) in the *hadith* and historical and biographical literature. Examples of his courage in adverse circumstances, for example, during the three nights he spent in a cave with Muhammad on their way to Medina while being pursued by hostile Meccans, are similarly stressed by al-Jahiz. Superior knowledge of genealogical relationships and of the religious law that allowed Abu Bakr to speedily end the *ridda* wars and restore political unity are extolled in the ʿUthmaniyya as pointing to his greater qualifications for the office of the caliph (al-Jahiz 1955:122ff.).

Implications for modern discourses

It is clear from this exposition that al-Jahiz's political thought has potentially great relevance for Muslim modernist and reformist thinkers who wish to tap into the classical period for broad directives on sound political governance. Al-Jahiz's exposition is firmly grounded in Qur'anic principles and relevant *hadith*, understood by him (and like-minded others) to point to a piety-based Muslim polity that selects its leader on the basis of his superior individual attributes and record of service to the community rather than out of considerations of kinship and worldly status. In addition to the Qur'an and *hadith*, al-Jahiz's arguments also appeal to the praxis of the Companions of the Prophet as recorded in historical and biographical works. He therefore mines the gamut of religious, historical, and biographical sources available to present a cogent and holistic account of the political consciousness of the earliest Muslims.

It is no wonder that some contemporary Muslims often repeat the same sterile discourse on 'Islamic government' and its supposedly authoritarian nature because they restrict themselves to a few, standard sources from after the 9th century, like *al-Ahkam al-Sultaniyya* of al-Mawardi and *al-Siyasa al-shariʿiyya* of Ibn Taymiyya (d. 1328). Ibn Taymiyya, for example on the topic of governance, is of the opinion that Muslims must discharge their duties to the ruler (*al-sultan*) to the fullest, 'even though he may be a tyrant' (Ibn Taymiyya 1951:28). Al-Mawardi refers to the Qur'anic verse 'O ye who believe! Obey God, and obey the Apostle, and those charged with authority (*ulu 'l-amr*) among you' (Surat al-Nisa' 4:59) and explicates it as mandating virtually unquestioning obedience on the part of Muslims to their appointed leaders (*al-a'imma al-muta'ammarun*) (al-Mawardi 1996:13). In the ʿUthmaniyya, al-Jahiz indicates, however, the range of possible interpretations of this verse: some Qur'an exegetes have understood the phrase *ulu 'l-amr* to have a restricted application and to apply only to specific agents (*ʿummal*) of the Prophet, or to specific commanders of his armies such as Abu Musa al-Ashʿari. Others have understood it to refer to political rulers (*salatin*; *umara*'). Yet others have interpreted this phrase to refer more broadly to the Companions of the Prophet as a group, and/or to Muslims in general (al-Jahiz 1955:115ff.). The last interpretation would invest the entire Muslim community (or, at the very least, its righteous members) with moral and political authority.

This discussion was intended to show that recourse to the panoply of early literature at our disposal – historical records, exegetical works, and treatises such as al-Jahiz's al-ʿUthmaniyya in addition to the Qur'an and *hadith* – opens up the parameters of the discourse on legitimate leadership and organization of the Muslim polity. This admits of a much more creative engagement with the early history of Islam and also, one should add, allows for a more realistic retrieval of the political consciousness of early Muslims. This consciousness appears remarkably hospitable to certain concepts associated with the modern civil and democratic polity: consultative government, public accountability of political leaders, and citizenship of the individual. The Islamic medieval discourse on the politics of piety, reconstructed from these diverse sources, may indeed be recast today in the idiom of civil society and made relevant once again.

References

- *Al-Hajjaj, Muslim b. 1995.* Al-Sahih. *Beirut.*
- *Al-Jahiz, ʿAmr b. Bahr. 1955.* Risalat al-ʿUthmaniyya. *Edited by ʿAbd al-Salam Harun. Cairo.*
- *Al-Mawardi, ʿAli b. Muhammad.* 1996. Al-Ahkam al-Sultaniyya wa'l-wilaya al-diniyya. *Beirut.*
- *Ibn Taymiyya, Taqi al-Din. 1951.* Al-Siyasa al-shariʿiyya fi islah al-raʿi wa-'l-raʿiyya. *Cairo.*

Asma Afsaruddin is assistant professor of Arabic and Islamic Studies, University of Notre Dame, Indiana, USA, and author of Excellence and Precedence: Medieval Islamic Discourse on Legitimate Leadership *(Leiden, 2002).*
E-mail: Asma.Afsaruddin.1@nd.edu

Link: http://www.realpatidar.com/library
email: mail@realpatidar.com

https://archive.org/details/bk375/page/n27/mode/1up

2002-12 -The Tale of Hidden Pir -ISIM (375)

India
DOMINIQUE-SILA KHAN

The Tale of the Hidden Pir

Histories tell us how, threatened by state power and by various pressure groups, resisting communities have chosen to go underground, surviving clandestinely as a whole or partly concealing their activities. This phenomenon testifies to the permanence of dynamic, antinomian trends in societies. A particular type is expressed by the tales of religious dissimulation – practised by Jews, Christians, and Muslims – referred to in the Islamic idiom as *taqiyya*.

South Asian history shows that, in the past, the huge diversity of beliefs and practices ensured not only a certain amount of tolerance but a great deal of interactions, exchanges, and even the existence of overlapping identities. This is still the case in contemporary India, although shared space and times in religious life tend to diminish, mainly owing to the increasing Hindu-Muslim divide that started to emerge about one century ago.

The precautionary concealment of Islamic traditions in predominantly Hindu communities has become more urgent in the face of growing Hindu right-wing fundamentalism. From the Arya Samaj to the Sanatan Dharm movement, the RSS and the VHP Hindu leaders posing as reformists and 'revivalists' made all possible efforts to convince various Hindu – generally low-caste, tribal or 'liminal' groups – to discontinue Muslim traditions and customs, which they regarded as 'impure' or non-Hindu. The response to these pressures is far from having always been positive: apart from those who fully accepted these dictates or started open resistance, a number of communities opted for concealment. Interestingly, dissimulation, ceasing to be a unique feature of some Shi'a communities, became a more general practice that extended to much wider spheres of society. An interesting illustration of this phenomenon is the telltale story of the Diggy Kalyanji temple located to the south of Jaipur, Rajasthan.

Invisible pirs

The pilgrims or tourists who visited the shrine 15 or 20 years ago still remember that it was a simple underground chamber where the devotees – Hindus and Muslims – came to bow in front of the grave of a mysterious Sufi saint, that had been erected side by side with an icon of a Hindu folk deity. Local priests, posing as Hindus, were doing the usual service of the *mazar* (grave). After a Hindu trust took over the management of the structure it was decided to lock this underground and to build a brand-new temple above, in front of an old, dilapidated tower where one can still admire classical sculptures representing various Hindu deities. Brahmins were entrusted with the regular worship. It did not take long before new generations of ignorant pilgrims started to regard this place as a 'pure' Hindu, Brahmanical temple, not even being aware of the existence of a 'hidden treasure'. However, as soon as the tomb had been abandoned various disasters took place in the small town of Diggy. This was immediately interpreted by the local pandits as the 'wrath of the pir'. To prevent further problems, they took the following decision: the Brahmin priests would secretly visit the underground twice a day and perform, as earlier, the ritual washing of the grave and the usual offerings. Besides, on the top, at the temple level, a rectangular enclosure was erected around the symbol of Shiva, to prevent the devotees from unwittingly 'treading on the pir' of whose existence they were not aware, but whose *barakat* had been fully recognized by the 'pure' Hindu priests. If all my elder informants knew about the existence of the sacred grave, it is a young Muslim living in the nearby city of Malpura who told us the story: recently he had seen, with his own eyes, the *mazar* located in the secret underground chamber; entrusted with the renovation of the dilapidated walls the painter had been taken to the place by one of the Brahmin priest's sons who was – a noteworthy detail – his best friend.

A case that may appear similar to a certain extent is that of Panna (Madhya Pradesh). The ordinary visitor and devotee can no longer see the *mazar* of Mahamati Prannath (traditionally referred to as Nishalank Budh Avatar and Imam Mahdi), the 17th-century Guru of the Pranami faith (Khan 2002); the underground tomb is now entirely hidden by a structure consisting of a platform on the top of which the *Qulzam Sharif*, the Pranami Holy book, is installed. There is also a world of difference between the openly disclosed ideas and the 'clandestine' doctrine of the Pranamis. For instance, while the modern literature portrays the sect as a basically Hindu tradition, the *Qulzam Sharif* is described by the founders themselves as the 'Sahebi' or 'Imam Qur'an', and their religion is constantly referred to as 'Islam' and 'Din-e Islam Haqiqi' – one of the traces of its Ismaili origin.

In this respect, the underground Sufi saint of Diggy, like the invisible Mahdi of Panna, could also be compared to one of the hidden (living) pirs of the present *imamshahis* of Gujarat – an offshoot of the Nizari sect (Khan and Moir 2000). Along with some of his followers, the Sayyid who claims to be the direct descendant of Imam Shah practises *taqiyya* to protect his community from the Hindu fundamentalist wave: in doing so he reproduced the typical behaviour of the earlier South Asian Nizaris during Sunni rule.

There are other, even more original ways to conceal a pir, not necessarily connected with a conscious or unconscious Shi'i *taqiyya*. As spies have always known, there is no better hiding place than one's own body. Is that why, even in modern India, so many Hindus are allegedly possessed by a pir? Far from being simple cases of 'primitive' spirit possession, these stories often have interesting consequences: while becoming the *savari* of a Muslim saint or martyr, the Hindu devotee temporarily adopts a new religious identity, revealing at times a surprising knowledge of Islamic, Qur'anic terminology of which he claims to be otherwise utterly ignorant.

These phenomena should not be misconstrued hastily as mere superstitions or idolatry. Apart from being genuine traces of an older, half-forgotten Sunni Sufi or Ismaili heritage, these practices are, in popular milieus, powerful and natural means of ensuring mutual tolerance and maintaining communal harmony, unless…

True, if we look at the case of that upper-caste trader who has joined the ranks of Hindu right-wing organizations: far from his residence he behaves like an uncompromising, fierce ideologist of 'Hindutva', but when he returns home he never forgets to make offerings to the 'invisible pir' symbolized by an oil lamp (*chirag*) installed inside a recess of his room. This pir is not a simple household spirit but a real Sufi saint whose spiritual teaching had once been accepted by the trader's ancestors without formally converting to Islam.

The colour of *taqiyya*

The underground motive – strongly reminiscent of the symbol of the Christian catacombs often wrongly imagined as places of concealment – has its parallel in other 'clever strategies' used by communities who wish to pose as 'full-fledged' Hindus to dissimulate Islamic features. As religious identities in South Asia came to be more sharply defined, essentially in terms of two antagonistic blocs, colours were used among the symbols that served to demarcate the two 'communities': saffron for Hinduism, green for Islam. For instance, many local shrines that, seen from outside, once looked exactly the same – rough, square white-washed structures – started to display saffron and green flags, while the walls of Muslim *dargahs* were often painted green. However, the re-Hinduized, 'liminal' – I would rather say crypto-Islamic – shrines had to face another problem: if the leaders of the sects wished to pose as genuine Hindus, at the same time they were reluctant to discard altogether what had been for centuries their sacred heritage. This is why they resorted to one of the 'clever strategies' to which I have been alluding: the ornate draperies (*chadar*) covering the holy graves of their founders and spiritual masters, which were usually green, were not removed but hidden by other *chadars* of saffron hue placed on the top.

If colours symbolize and signify, so do words. Nothing is simpler than avoiding the accusation that a supposedly Hindu place of worship looks like a Muslim shrine: in many cases changing its name is enough. *Dargah* will become *samadhi*, the pir a guru, the *murids* become *shishyas*, the term *mukam* can be explained as a corrupted form of *muktidham* (place of salvation), and the etymology of Pirana, the main centre of the *imamshahis*, is rendered as Prerna (Divine inspiration).

But to what conclusion does all this lead? There is no denying that resistance increases along with reaction. Besides, dissimulation has its limits – as is also well known in history. If it is a fact that Islamic markers increasingly go underground in contemporary communities who wish to be accepted as full-fledged Hindus, it is equally true that tradition is stronger than caution. This is revealed by simply peeping into a locked underground or 'lifting the veil': the Islamic colour – dear to the hearts of those sincere devotees – still shows through the apparently self-asserting but in reality infinitely light veneer of 'Hinduness'.

Continued from front page:
Converts and the Making of European Islam
by Stefano Allievi

is a most recent phenomenon – might be proportionally devalorized in the future.

However, starting from the second generation, we witness a sort of 'normalization' of the relationships and of the social separation of functions between converts and immigrants. It is not without reason that second-generation intellectuals compete with converts, but it is especially noteworthy that they also cooperate and mutually support each other in the battles over cultural hegemony fought against the first-generation leaders, or those coming from the Muslim countries.

The converts, in their 'dual position', appear to be able not only to serve a function in the relationship between Islam and the public space, but also in the transition between the Islam of the fathers and that of the sons, in unison with the second generation. In a way, the converts foreshadow a tendency of the second-generation Muslims towards an Islam that is no longer an inherited tradition, brought from the native country, but a conscious choice.

To sum up, the converts are in the ideal position to perform a function in the passage from Islam *in* Europe to Islam *of* Europe, and then in the creation of a *European* Islam. They are, after all, nothing more than Europeans of Islamic adherence, who cannot be qualified as immigrants or as bearers of a foreign culture. Consequently, they are also producers of an Islamic culture with a European inclination. They are in fact at the same time the product and the mediators of the meeting between Islam and Europe. A Europe that is also, without knowing it, the European part of the Islamic *umma*. To conclude, they globally perform a function that promises to have important consequences for the very self-definition of the European Islam, and perhaps also of the Islam 'of origin'.

Stefano Allievi is a researcher at the Department of Sociology, University of Padova, Italy. He teaches sociology at the Faculty of Communication Science, also at the University of Padova. He is author of Les convertis à l'islam. Les nouveaux musulmans d'Europe *(Paris: l'Harmattan, 1998).*
E-mail: stefano.allievi@unipd.it

References

- *Khan, Dominique-Sila, and Zawahir Moir. 1999. Conversion and Communalism – The Shrine of Pirana in Gujarat.* South Asia, *vol. XXII: 133–54.*
- *Khan, Dominique-Sila. 2002. The Prannathis of Rajasthan:* Bhakti *and* Irfan. *In L. A. Babb, V. Joshi, and M. Meister* (eds), Multiples Histories – Culture and Society in the Study of Rajasthan. *Jaipur: Rawat Publications.*

Dr Dominique-Sila Khan is an associate fellow at the Institute of Rajasthan Studies, Jaipur, India.

Link: http://www.realpatidar.com/library
email: mail@realpatidar.com

https://archive.org/details/bk375/page/n28/mode/1up

2002-12 -The Tale of Hidden Pir -ISIM (375)

Lebanon
LARA DEEB

Women's Community Service in Beirut

During Ramadan afternoons in *al-dahiyya al-janubiyya,* the southern suburbs of Beirut, while most people are rushing through traffic to arrive home before *iftar*, a bustle of activity fills a warehouse on a prominent street corner. A crowd of over one hundred people waits impatiently on one side of the building. On the other side, separated by a colourfully wallpapered partition, fifteen well-dressed women volunteers rush around filling plastic containers with food and packing them into bags along with bread, soda, vegetables, and sweets. At a table along the partition's edge, two volunteers hand these bags to those in the waiting crowd. Another table is occupied by several wealthy donors, sitting with two more volunteers, who entertain them while keeping track of the many children rushing around trying to help. This is the scene one hour before sunset during Ramadan at the food distribution centre of the Social Advancement Association (SAA).

PHOTO: LARA DEEB, BEIRUT, 2000

Volunteers shelling peas at the SAA centre during Ramadan.

The SAA is one of the many Islamic *jamʿiyyat,* or welfare organizations, located in *al-dahiyya*. The organization is active throughout the year, providing basic foodstuffs, clothing and shoes, essential household items, and health and educational assistance for approximately two hundred client families. The *jamʿiyya* also conducts education programmes on topics ranging from 'correct' religious knowledge to how to store food properly or treat a child's fever.

All of this is done almost entirely with women's volunteer labour. Without the time and energy of women volunteers, neither the Ramadan centre nor any of the other activities and projects of this and the other *jamʿiyyat* in the area would be possible.

Volunteering and piety

Women's motivations for volunteering vary, but no matter how and why a woman initially joins a *jamʿiyya*, it soon becomes an integral part of her life and identity, especially her identity as a pious member of the community. Volunteers understand faith as a ladder they must continually struggle to climb. One of the fundamental rungs on this ladder is *muʿamalat,* mutual reciprocal social relations. As the vehicle through which personal piety is most clearly brought into the public realm, community service is an important component of these social relations; a component that encapsulates both the personal morality and the public expression that together constitute piety in this community.

Taking this to an extreme, some volunteers have internalized these social expectations into an unorthodox conviction that community service is a religious 'duty' on par with prayer.

As one volunteer put it, '[f]or us it's not that it's a good thing for us to do this work – no, for us it's become an obligation, like prayer and fasting.' Demonstrating a sense of social responsibility is a critical aspect of being a moral person for many volunteers, and it is important to fulfil that responsibility before oneself and God.

In addition, in order to be seen as a 'good' Muslim woman in *al-dahiyya*, barring exempting circumstances, one is expected to participate in at least some of the activities of at least one *jamʿiyya.* Community service has become a new social norm. This expectation is conveyed by volunteers to their relatives, friends, and neighbours in conversations about *jamʿiyya* activities as well as outright attempts at recruitment. Once a *jamʿiyya* network identifies a potential participant who is judged to be of good moral character – or occasionally when an interested woman herself initiates contact with a *jamʿiyya* – she will receive a steady stream of telephone calls and invitations to attend fundraisers and other events. Gradually, she will be drawn into working with the *jamʿiyya* more regularly.

As a social norm for women, community service provides an externally visible marker of a woman's morality. While not volunteering does not necessarily damage a woman's status or reputation provided she has good reasons for not participating and is not assumed to spend her time frivolously, participating in the activities of a *jamʿiyya* adds significantly to public perceptions of her moral character. In this way community service has been incorporated into a normative moral system for women in *al-dahiyya.*

However, volunteers' prolific public participation is not without its critics. Despite its links to piety, a woman's volunteer activities are only met with approval if her household responsibilities are also fulfilled. Volunteers believe that with proper 'organization', women should be able to manage the double shift of household and community work, and many take pride in their ability to do so. This too is linked to piety, as the energy and ability to complete one's work in both arenas tirelessly and efficiently are viewed as gifts from God, and often taken as further indication of a woman's religiosity.

Why women?

As a public indicator of piety in *al-dahiyya,* community service is gender-specific, holding particular salience for women. To a certain extent, this obtains from the structure and method of the work itself. From among the myriad tasks and responsibilities fulfilled by volunteers, the most constant activity is regular visits to client families. During these visits, volunteers distribute material assistance, monitor changes in a family's economic, social, and health situation, draw on their personal networks to facilitate access to healthcare or employment, and provide advice and education. In essence, they function as liaisons between these families and the material and cultural resources managed and distributed by the *jamʿiyyat*. In a community where a woman's – and her family's – reputation would be severely compromised if she were to receive unaccompanied male visitors in her home, household visits are impossible for a male volunteer. Women volunteers, on the other hand, are able to enter homes readily. This is especially crucial as many of the households assisted by the *jamʿiyyat* are female-headed.

Furthermore, women are believed to be inherently suitable for community work due to an understanding of essentialized sex differences that posits women as more nurturing than men. Both women and men in the community indicate that women's natural empathetic and emotional capacities equip them to handle the emotional stress of dealing with poverty, to contribute to the proper upbringing of orphans and the education of the poor more generally, and to be committed to community welfare.

Interestingly these essentialized sex differences are not necessarily interpreted as limiting women to domestically oriented roles in society. Many in *al-dahiyya* believe women have the potential to make excellent doctors, engineers, and politicians. The sole exception to this is the battlefield. Women are believed to be innately unsuited to military service, and taking up arms is considered inappropriate except in situations of self-defence. In the context of Israeli occupation of southern Lebanon (and after, as the border is still considered an active front), community work represents an appropriate way for women to participate in the Islamic Resistance without entering the battlefield. In this sense, the importance of community service is not gender-specific, but the form that service takes is related to perceived gendered proclivities.

Finally, it is necessary to factor in a gender ideology that values men's work and time over women's, a valuation linked to the persistent notion that men are the primary providers. Women's employment is assumed to provide a secondary income to a household, and women's household duties are assumed to allow for more flexibility in time than men's work. Compounding this is the notion that paid employment in a *jamʿiyya* does not carry the same weight with regard to piety as volunteering does, because it does not represent the same level of self-sacrifice. Volunteering, for many women, is seen as a form of martyrdom, paid in sweat instead of blood.

Women in the public

So what does women's volunteerism in this community and its relationship to piety mean for gendered understandings of the public/private divide? As Suad Joseph has noted, researchers and theorists tend to view voluntary associations as a constituent aspect of civil society and to locate them in the public sphere. Coupled with assumptions about a gendered public/private divide, particularly in studies of the Middle East/North Africa, *jamʿiyyat* and other such organizations are thereby associated with men.* By their mere visibility in occupying public spaces and engaging in public work, women volunteers in *al-dahiyya* challenge these assumptions and conclusions. Yet the gendered divide between the public and private has been critiqued as overly dichotomous, particularly in the context of the Middle East. Women's community service in *al-dahiyya* reflects the porosity and the blurring of the division itself.

On the one hand, women in *al-dahiyya* are challenging traditional gendered boundaries through their active participation in the public sphere. This is the view of many SAA volunteers. For example, while expounding on the importance of the SAA as a women-only *jamʿiyya* one afternoon, Hajji Amal observed that '[m]en think that women can't have a *jamʿiyya* that works, because they think that when women gather we just gossip or fight.' She went on to assert her hopes that, through the work of the SAA they would be able to change men's views of women in the community by providing an example of a well-run and well-organized women's organization. At the same time, women's volunteerism draws on traditional gender roles and definitions.

Women's community service is also public with regard to the public marker of morality it carries. The understandings of piety that include community service as a constituent component are understandings produced in part by women in the community. Volunteers' argument that women have the same capacity for rationality as men is often extended to state that therefore, community service should be the rational choice for good Muslim women in the community and the logical extension of one's moral responsibility. While this argument draws upon notions of gender equity, it also contributes to the construction of a social norm that carries moral implications for women with regard to status and reputation. In this way, women are participating in the construction of community service as a social norm, and the proliferation of a broader normative moral system that may be as constraining as it is liberating.

realpatidar.com

Note

* Suad Joseph, 'Gender and Civil Society' (Interview with Joe Stork), in Joel Beinin and J. Stork (eds), *Political Islam: Essays from Middle East Report* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 64–70.

Lara Deeb is a Ph.D. candidate in anthropology at Emory University, USA.
E-mail: ldeeb@learnlink.emory.edu

https://archive.org/details/bk375/page/n29/mode/1up

2002-12 -The Tale of Hidden Pir -ISIM (375)

Gambia
MARLOES JANSON

On the Boundaries of **Muslim Gender Ideology**

Gambian griottes, or female bards, are in a serious predicament. Islamic ethics prescribe that women should behave in a modest way, while conversely the griottes' very profession implies that they stand out by their behaviour and the way they dress. How do these women reconcile their identity as female performers with Islamic values? The Gambia is an interesting setting in which to explore this question because of its long history with Islam. There was even talk that President Jammeh wanted to impose the *shari'a* in this small West African country.

For centuries the griottes' male counterparts, the griots, have attracted the attention of scholars. If griottes are mentioned in literature, however, they mostly appear only in footnotes, or are mentioned in passing. Indeed, in actual fact they are very conspicuous in the Gambia. They can be recognized by their flamboyant style of dressing, and with their sharp voices they are audible from a great distance. This being the case, the following aims to provide insight into the griottes' practices. The main activity of griottes is performing *daaniroo*, a Mandinka* word that is difficult to translate. When griottes set out for *daaniroo*, they sing or recite their patrons' praises. Praises, which are composed of a mixture of fixed formulae and genealogies, are powerful since they affect and persuade the patron by referring to the great deeds of his or her ancestors. In return for their praises, the griottes are rewarded with money or goods. So, *daaniroo* can be interpreted both as praising and as gift exchange.

Daaniroo not only refers to the gift exchange between griottes and their patrons, but also to the gift exchange between believers and God. People beseech God by offering alms to a mediator, in the hope that God will reward them with divine blessings. In the relationship between griottes and patrons, *daaniroo* has the connotation of 'praising' and this is a way for the patron to accrue prestige. In the relationship between Muslims and God, *daaniroo* has the connotation of 'praying' with the aim of entreating a blessing. An equivalence exists between its performance in the sense of praising and its performance in the sense of praying. In both cases it concerns an invocation that is responded to by a reward: a gift from the patron or grace from God. There are also differences, in particular because of the ambivalent relationship between music and belief in Islamic tradition (cf. Charry 2000). There is an inherent tension between the exaltation of man and the adoration of God. Qur'anic scholars, who have an influential position in the area where my field research was conducted, therefore considered the Islamic identity of griottes dubious. They believed that these women could not sing and still be good Muslims. In their opinion singing distracts the worshippers' attention from God and leads to the loss of one's self-control.

A distinction can be drawn between two occasions on which griottes practise *daaniroo*. On the first type of occasion they are invited by their patrons to perform. This includes naming ceremonies, marriages, and initiations. On the second type of occasion griottes themselves take the initiative to perform, including at the market. In the area around Basse Santa Su, the provincial capital of eastern Gambia, griottes are difficult to ignore. The market is a convenient place because griottes are free to go there whenever they want, whereas ceremonies are not organized on a daily basis. At the market they easily meet people and earn a little, as people usually have money in their pockets when they go to Basse Santa Su. *Daaniroo* at the market is probably a recent phenomenon. Several middle-aged griottes construed it as the outcome of the historical process in which colonialism induced changes that eroded the old system of patronage. In order to survive, they had to perform at the market. The development of *daaniroo* at the market may also be related to rising economic pressure on women. The griottes with whom I worked complained that they have many 'family problems' nowadays, and indeed, they have become to a great extent responsible for feeding their households. Taking into account that most of them do not farm and that regular employment is restricted to men, these women have to generate money to pay for food. The market is the natural place to practise *daaniroo* because food crops are sold there.

Griottes dividing up their market *daaniroo* earnings.

PHOTO: MARLOES JANSON, 1998

The performance at the market is considered not an 'authentic' form of *daaniroo*, and several patrons condemn it, preferring the *daniroo* performed at their ceremonies and upon their invitation. The local Islamic scholars disapprove of *daaniroo* at the market for other reasons. In their perception earning a living by means of music is immoral. They argue that griottes should not 'expose' themselves as public women. Islamic law commends unremitting labour, but in the judgement of the Muslim clerics, *daaniroo* practised at the market cannot be regarded as work. The leader of The Gambia Muslim Women's Association compared it to exploitation:

'Griottes beg from us even though they are sometimes richer than we are. Nevertheless, we have to give them our last cent, which we had saved to support our families. What griottes do is very bad and therefore they will have marks in their faces by which they can be recognized on Judgement Day. The Prophet has said that we should scatter sand in their faces.'

Moreover, the griottes' increasing contributions to household maintenance collides with the Muslim ideal of the man as the principal provider.

The negative assessment of the griottes' public performances as conflicting with Islamic morals may have been increased under the influence of 'bumpsing' (following tourists). As a result of the enormous growth of the tourist industry on the Gambian coast, numerous boys turned 'bumpsing' into a profession. These 'bumpsters' regard tourists as patrons who can provide money, luxury goods, and mobility. Some equate the obtrusive way 'bumpsters' ask for gifts with the activities of griottes. They note that 'bumpsing' as well as *daaniroo* as it is practised today is *haram*. The griottes themselves see no contradiction between being a Muslim and being a bard. They try to behave as correct Muslims by living according to the pillars of Islam and react to the scepticism of the Qur'anic scholars by accentuating the Islamic dimension of their profession.

Islamizing griottes

A striking development is that the griottes often frame their *daaniroo* as a form of praying. The way they request their patrons for gifts may, to a certain extent, be equated with the way mendicants beg for alms. Griottes, for example, punctuate the praises sung or recited for their patrons at the market with blessings. These blessings tend to be fairly formulaic utterances, of the sort 'May God bless you with long life'. Furthermore, they lace their praises with Qur'anic verses and religious phrases. When setting out for the market, griottes often wear a special kind of headdress that is usually worn by people who have made the *hajj*. It seems that by wearing this headdress they want to emphasize their devotion. They also explain their choice of dress in an Islamic context stressing that they dress splendidly to demonstrate that they have 'a clean heart' (i.e. that their appearance corresponds to their moral values). Griottes also interpret their way of practising *daaniroo* in a moral context. Before they set out for the market, they form groups because as pious Muslims, they believe, they are not allowed to perform individually. A woman venturing on to the street alone is regarded as 'prey to Satan'. By practising on her own, a griotte runs the risk of being depicted as a 'wanton woman'. When she mingles with her colleagues, social control is being exercised. It seems that griottes single out specific elements of their traditional cultural background and integrate and reinterpret them in the light of Muslim norms, in order to meet the expectations of the local reformist scholars. The roles of griottes may have expanded to incorporate various aspects of an Islamic culture, as the Gambian president, Yayha Jammeh, lately began to demand greater adherence to the rules of the religion.

In their movements women are restricted by the boundaries of the dominant Muslim gender ideology, but griottes have to cross these boundaries to be able to exercise their profession. In their position as bards, they have acquired a certain freedom that other women in Gambian society are not allowed to exercise. On the one hand, this explains their strong position, but on the other hand, it makes them vulnerable to criticism. To disentangle themselves from this ambiguous position in which they operate, griottes have developed strategies to embed their performances in a reformist Islamic discourse. By employing such strategies, they are attempting to earn a living without subverting their position as respectable Muslim women.

Note

* The Mandinka comprise the majority of the Gambian population.

References

Charry, E. 2000. *Music and Islam in Sub-Saharan Africa. In N. Levtzion and R.L. (eds),* The History of Islam in Africa. *Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press.*

Marloes Janson holds a Ph.D. in anthropology and is currently teaching at the University of Amsterdam. Janson's Ph.D. thesis was entitled The Best Hand is the Hand that Always Gives. Griottes and Their Profession in Eastern Gambia *(Leiden: Research School CNWS, 2002).*
E-mail: m.janson@let.leidenuniv.nl

Link: http://www.realpatidar.com/library
email: mail@realpatidar.com

https://archive.org/details/bk375/page/n30/mode/1up

2002-12 -The Tale of Hidden Pir -ISIM (375)

Senegal
CLEO CANTONE

Women Claiming Space in Mosques

A subject that has largely been overlooked until recently and whose implications for the various fields of Islamic studies are wide-ranging, is female mosque attendance and the corresponding spatial organization that it entails. In Senegal the rise and influence of the Mouvement Islamique has granted women a place in the mosque formerly denied them by the *turuq*, the Sufi brotherhoods. Degrees of spatial marginalization, on the one hand, and appropriation, on the other, vary. Much of the current literature on Senegal maintains that the impact of Islamism is still relatively small. Although religious observance in Senegal is relatively strong and predominantly Sufi in its orientation, the recent infiltration of 'Wahhabi' ideas has given women greater access to public places of worship.

PHOTO: CLEO CANTONE, 2001

University Mosque, Dakar. View of 'Les crintins' and the courtyard.

Within the *turuq* the mosque plays no role in the religious life of women. Rather, women's religious activity has revolved around alternative structures, such as pilgrimages to saints' tombs. Indeed, the notion of Sufism representing 'popular' Islam often carries the implication that women opt for this in favour of the more puritanical form of Islam because it gives them greater room to manoeuvre in the religious activities of their choice. In the case of Senegal, however, only a few women hold positions of authority within the *turuq*, and, surprisingly, these isolated cases have lead some scholars to comment that 'maraboutic and brotherhood Islam will be thus the religion of women par excellence'.[1] In reality, with the possible exception of the Layenne *tariqa*, women's position is clearly inferior to that of men and in no place is this more apparent than in the mosque.

Most Senegalese mosques, in fact, whether Tijani, Mouride, or Qadr, to mention the most important *turuq*, exclude the participation of young women altogether and relegate those women who are no longer considered to be capable of tempting men to small buildings that are disconnected from the mosque proper. The situation noted by Paul Marty during the French colonization of Senegal at the turn of the last century has virtually remained unchanged:

'We see, however, a few old women in certain mosques at the Friday prayer. Elsewhere, when there is a sufficiently substantial and tenacious core of devotees, a small boarded or thatched cabin is constructed for them in a corner of the courtyard; and from there, alone among themselves, they can follow the mosque service.'[2]

With the exception of the two great mosques of Dakar and Touba, the majority of mosques fit this description. Explanations given point to the fact that according to Maliki tradition, women are not obliged to attend Friday prayer and young women should not attend at all. Mouride informants in Thiès, including a prominent marabout, stressed that women should not frequent the mosque because they distract men[3] and because their only reason for coming to the mosque is to 'think about men'. This attitude helps to explain why there are special male guards in the Great Mosque of Touba, the 'Mecca' of the Mouride *tariqa*, to separate women past the menopause from all other women, including those with small children. The former are allowed into the mosque precinct in a wing designed to accommodate them, whereas the latter must make do with the marble pavement or the gravel outside.

Generally, Mouride women are taught how to pray but rarely are taught Arabic so that they can understand what they are reciting. Their Muslim education does not exceed rote learning of a few *suras* from the Qur'an; hence there is little scope for them to further their religious knowledge. By contrast, reformist Islam encourages religious education and this often takes place in the mosque, in particular among Ibadous, who derive their name from the Qur'anic term *Ibadu ar-Rahman*, or slaves of the Merciful, organized in the Jamaatou Ibadou Rahmane group. Henceforth the term Ibadou is widely used to designate those who veil, wear a beard, and pray with their arms crossed. As one Ibadou informant put it, 'people are hungry for the truth' and the mosque becomes the ideal locus to convey this message. In order to fulfil this mission, the mosque must open its doors to women as well as men.

Les filles voil es

Reformist Islam is not new to Senegal, yet it has only been in the last fifteen years that such strands have had an explicit and very tangible influence on women. The most obvious markers of this shift in religious orientation are undoubtedly the *hijab* and frequenting the mosque, both of which are in breach of local interpretations of what a Muslim woman should or should not do. Instead of following one particular school of thought, the Ibadous claim to follow all four Sunni schools of law. Female Sunni informants, known as *les filles voilées*, would quote a number of *hadiths* to support women's presence in the mosque and would admit that often the mosque was the place where they learned such *hadiths*. Most of the respondents to my questionnaires were young students with some proficiency in French. Most had started to wear the *hijab* and frequent the mosque in their early twenties, in the mid-1990s.

Some of the first women to veil did so under the influence of the Jamaatou Ibadou Rahmane. The style of the veil has distinct Middle Eastern origins, pinned or sewn under the chin, often trimmed with lace and rarely going below the bosom. Colours are varied and match with brightly coloured clothes and extendible petty-coats, used to cover feet during prayer. By contrast, the newly emerging reformist movement is introducing much more sober colours and styles, including the dark, opaque chador-like garment and the use of socks. The most eloquent proof of the growing number of Sunni-Ibadous is reflected in the University of Dakar. In the university's mosque, during peek times, especially Friday prayers, few of the dark *hijab*s remain. Their wearers frequent a reformist mosque, more in keeping with their attire, where the segregation of the sexes is marked by a main road.

The outskirts of the capital are witnessing a mushrooming of new Ibadou mosques. And the more mosques open their doors to women, the more women come there to pray. Many of my respondents said they came to learn about their religion or to hear the sermon of the imam in their own language rather than in Arabic, as is the practice in the majority of mosques affiliated to a *tariqa*.

Women's space

The metaphor of opening the doors to women has a literal manifestation as well. In many of the so-called Ibadou mosques, on Fridays, when there is an overflow of worshippers, the back door is left open so that women praying outside can still participate visually in the ceremony. Sometimes this technique is also used to accommodate women during their monthly periods when they cannot enter the mosque. This simple measure ensures that they can continue with their religious classes on *tafsir* or *hadith* while not being able to take up their usual space for the five daily prayers directly behind the men.

Another way of accommodating women below the age of menopause is to allow small children into the mosque. In one mosque, on Tuesday afternoons women from all parts of Dakar and from different social backgrounds meet to be taught Arabic, *hadith*, and the Qur'an as well as general knowledge. They bring their children and sit outside as described above when they are ritually unclean. This little prayer room for women situated in the courtyard of the men's mosque has been renamed Mosquée Aisha. The connotations of the name are twofold: one refers to the historical figure of Aisha, reputed to have been a lady of learning, and the other makes a clear reference to the Sunni/Ibadou orientation of the establishment.

One of the most significant examples of the transformation of mosque space into a women's area is in Cité Soprim, also in the outskirts of Dakar. Here the former women's prayer room adjacent to the mosque proper has been knocked down and redesigned by a female architect, also an Ibadou. The new women's space includes a wide window to allow the women to participate visually in the Friday prayer. Senegalese mosques usually comprise no more than one floor. Cité Soprim is an exception and so is the new mosque on the south side of the island of Saint Louis, Mosquée Ihsan. In both these cases architectural inspiration came from the Middle East: in the former the intention was to accommodate the women on the upper storey but this idea was later abandoned for logistical reasons. Firmly entrenched in the Tijani tradition, Mosquée Ihsan controversially accommodates women in the gallery above the men.

Today, not only are more women frequenting the mosque, their very presence in the mosque embodies the notion of appropriation. Spatially, appropriation is reflected in the varying degrees to which women have gained either physical or visual access to what was previously out of bounds for them in the men's part of the mosque. In terms of generation, younger women have often gone to considerable lengths to don the *hijab* and frequent the mosque regularly, in breach of local custom, which discourages and even threatens them. Islamic dress code acts as a means to access public prayer places and signifies a greater acquaintance with their religious rights and duties. Similarly, degrees of covering point to varying doctrinal orientations and serve as identity markers.

Notes

1. Originally in French: 'l'Islam maraboutique et confrérique serait alors par excellence la religion des femmes'. C. Coulon cited in C. Laborde, *La confrérie Layenne et les Lébou du Sénégal: Islam et culture traditionnelle en Afrique* (Institut d'Études Politiques de Bordeaux, 1995), 86.
2. Originally in French: 'On voit toutefois quelques vieilles femmes dans certaines mosquées, à la prière du vendredi. Ailleurs, quand il y a un noyau de dévotes assez important et tenace, on leur construit une petite case de planches ou de chaume, dans un coin de la cour; et de là, seules entre elles, elles peuvent suivre l'office de la mosquée.' P. Marty, *Etudes de l'Islam au Sénégal* (Paris: Editions Larose, 1917), 38.
3. See also research by Olga F. Linares, which reveals the same attitude towards women: *Power, Prayer and Production: The Jola of Casamance, Senegal* (1992), 173.

Cleo Cantone is a Ph.D. candidate at SOAS, London, UK.
E-mail: cleosenegal@yahoo.co.uk

Link: http://www.realpatidar.com/library
email: mail@realpatidar.com

https://archive.org/details/bk375/page/n31/mode/1up

2002-12 -The Tale of Hidden Pir -ISIM (375)

Roundtable Report

MARGOT BADRAN

Bosnia: Re/turning to Islam, Finding Feminism

Islamic feminism/s as forms of consciousness, thinking, and practice are ascendant, yet in many places they still all too often go unnoticed. In Bosnia rising generations of Muslim women and men emerging from an atheistic past and the horrors of war are finding their own way back to Islam. In the process, and with a heightened awareness of justice and sensitivity to gender, they are coming to Islamic feminism as voices from Sarajevo tell us.

The present moment in Bosnia is one of both promise and peril. The country emerged from half a century of communism only to experience a war that viciously shredded it. There are two major influxes from outside: political Islamic currents and cadres of peaceniks, each working closely with insiders. Neither is particularly congenial to gender. The former want to take over gender and impose their conservative agenda. The latter ignore gender altogether. With the protracted public erasure of religion Muslims had confined themselves mainly to discrete home rituals. The 1970s saw a certain liberalizing when there was some public space accorded to religion but this occurred in a context of state control. The Muslim community and the administrative religious leadership, the Rijaset, show marks of the constraints of the past. Now new generations of Muslims are re/turning to Islam. But to what Islam? Herein lies the story of an emergent Islamic feminism in Bosnia.

The local feminist scene

When I was invited by Rusmir Mahmutcehajic, Head of the International Forum Bosnia, to participate in the Roundtable on Women and Sacrality in Sarajevo in October (2002), organized by its Centre for the Study of Gender Issues, where I gave a paper on 'Islamic Feminism/s in and beyond East and West', I found it an excellent chance to explore the local Islamic feminist scene. Most simply defined, Islamic feminism is a discourse and practice grounded in the Qur'an and its core ideas of social justice and gender equality. It is a growing global discourse informing and informed by local elaborations and practices. How does Bosnia fit into the picture or how does Bosnia fill out the picture? Personal trajectories offer salient insights.

Samir Beglerovic is a graduate student at the Faculty of Islamic Studies (Fakultet Islamskih Nauka), an independent institution of higher study founded in 1977 offering undergraduate education as well as M.A.s and Ph.D.s. He explains quite simply that he is an Islamic feminist because he wants 'to express the Islamic view'. The ease and conviction with which he says this may take aback those who consider the combination of Islam and feminism an oxymoron. But to him it makes perfect sense. Growing up knowing little about Islam, Samir, born in 1973, was an atheist. The experience of war helped catapult him to Islam. Coming to knowledge of Islam through the door of the Qur'an, he finds in Islam's Holy Book a strong statement of justice and equality that cannot be parsed: justice and equality cannot logically be allocated to some and not to others. He was meanwhile encouraged in his progressive thinking at the Faculty of Islamic Studies by Adnan Silajdzic, a professor of *ʿaqa'id*, and Reshid Hafizovitch who teaches Sufism, who were both attentive to gender, as well as Esmet Busatlic, a professor of Islamic Culture and Civilization through whom resonates the tradition of Islamic humanism. To widen their debates on Islamic feminism and other key issues Samir and a group of fellow students from the Faculty of Islamic Studies, along with others from medicine, engineering, and economics, set up a website called Znaci, or Signs (www.znaci.com).

Amra Pandzo-Djuric is of the same generation as Samir. She too comes from an atheist past and although also from a Muslim family she calls herself a convert to Islam. 'A convert? Yes', she affirmed, 'I was an atheist and I converted to Islam.' She was quick to say also that she is an Islamic feminist. Amra, who acts as the administrator of the International Forum Bosnia's Centre for the Study of Gender Issues, is also doing an M.A. in social work at the Faculty of Political Science at Sarajevo University. Earlier she had worked as a journalist for the wide-circulation magazine *Dani* and for Bosnia-Herzegovina state television. During the war she turned her attention to directing a youth programme set up by a French NGO and when the fighting ceased she helped found and run the NGO Information Support Centre. Like most women everywhere Amra came to feminism through her experience as woman: the everyday experience of inequities, injustices, and patronizing behaviours. She found her own solution and path away from patriarchal injustices in the course of her return – her conversion – to the Islam of the Qur'an. However, she feels a need to know much more: 'I am an Islamic feminist in the sense that I want to discover more fully what it means to be a woman in Islam and really fight for it. This means practising Islam in an enlightened way.'

Others I met from a slightly older generation were unfamiliar with Islamic feminism, but were open. Nirman Moranjik-Bamburac, Head of the International Forum Bosnia's Centre for Gender Issues, is a professor at the Department of Comparative Literature in the Faculty of Philosophy at the University of Sarajevo and at the Academy of Dramatic Arts. She teaches feminist literary criticism, and is a feminist herself but admits that until now she has not dealt with religious aspects of feminism. She was quick to add, however, that it interested her: 'It is necessary to learn about Islamic feminism because we have a lot of women who are believers and who are sensitive to gender discourse.' She concedes that although feminist books first came to Bosnia more than two decades ago (the earliest from France and the United States), feminism to this day remains controversial in the academy as well as the broader society.

I met Nermina Baljevic at the NGO Zene Zenama, or Woman to Woman (or I should say I re-met her for we had first come together at an international Islamist conference gathering women from around the world in Khartoum in 1991). She conceded that she does not like the word feminism, reflecting a common perception that feminism is alien to her culture and associated with negative ideas and practices. But, she went on to confess that she does not really know what feminism means. The record of Nirmina's life itself reads like a feminist CV par excellence. Hostilities had barely cooled down when this single mother (whose husband was killed during the war) became a member of parliament serving for four years, being its only veiled parliamentarian. In 2002 she quit politics to turn her attention to reconstructing civil society through independent activism, working with the NGO Woman to Woman she had helped to organize after the Dayton Accords. Woman to Woman monitors laws and legislative debates concerning the well-being and stability of society as a whole while keeping an alert eye on gender. The NGO also organizes women's studies courses that examine various forms of feminisms but have yet to deal with Islamic feminism. Nirmina added almost parenthetically that she was the first woman in Bosnia to be trained as a theologian. She had been part of the initial entering class at the Faculty of Theology and took her degree in 1981. Her professor, the late Ahmet Smajlovic, helped arrange for her to continue her graduate studies at al-Azhar University in Cairo, but untoward circumstances put an end to this. Focusing on the present and future she said with conviction: 'I am always for movement – for upward movement. I would like to know more about Islamic feminism.'

Specificities: The Bosnian weave

Several things are striking about Islamic feminism in Bosnia: the particular combination of an atheistic upbringing and war that propels a return to a gender-egalitarian Islam, especially evident among the younger generations; interest by both women and men; courage to stand up and be counted as Islamic feminists; and an openness to Islamic feminism by those who had not considered it before. Also notable among Bosnian Muslims is the absence of a religiously based antagonism to the West, which is hardly possible because they *are* Western. Shaped within an old Western Islamic society, yet one with Eastern historical influences, and the only Western Muslim community that does not constitute a minority, Bosnian Islamic feminism will have important things to say to Muslims in the new Muslim communities in Western Europe and the Americas, as well as to Muslims in the older Eastern societies still uncomfortable with 'the West'.

Meanwhile outside political Islamic currents are inhibiting to those Bosnian Muslims seeking their own path. Both Samir and Amra spoke of the attempts of various Islamist currents (the Wahabbis, other Salafis, Shi'is, etc.) to exert influence and win local adherents. Samir tells how others are quick to name him and claim him. He simply wants to find his own way in Islam. Amra points to the negative gender dimension of such influences and pressures: 'With all these currents women are really suffering and being misused.'

What about Islamic feminism, pluralism, and peace? A multiplicity of religions and ethnicities has always been an integral part of the Bosnian weave. New to Bosnia is what is labelled inter-faith or intercultural dialogue – what before was simply called talking to your neighbour or debating with your colleague. Intersections of religions and ethnicities have always been found in Bosnia even at the heart of families themselves. In our movements around Sarajevo, Amra and I came face-to-face with some of those proclaiming their dedication to intercultural dialogue and peace. On two different occasions we were firmly told that with the *serious* problems Bosnians now face there is no time to talk about women, gender, or feminism. For such people, no hard ethnic issues, no hard religious issues, and certainly no hard gender issues – indeed no gender issues at all. I came to understood her disaffection with the shallowness of much of the 'dialogue' and what can be called 'soft-togetherness'. Quick with the *bon mot* Amra said: 'I think it is essential to discuss, but to discuss essential things.' Our talk steered to the Qur'an. 'Oh, humankind! We created you from a single (pair), *male* and *female,* and *nations* and *tribes* that you may know one another (not that you may despise one another)' (49:13, emphasis added). Why remove gender from inter-religious and intercultural dialogue? A good Bosnian Islamic feminist question.

realpatidar.com

Margot Badran is a senior fellow at the Centre for Muslim Christian Understanding at Georgetown University. She is a historian of the modern Middle East, women, and gender. Currently at the ISIM completing a book on comparative Islamic feminism/s, she is also editor of Brill's new series on Women and Gender in the Middle East and Islamic World.
E-mail: mafbadran@post.harvard.edu

https://archive.org/details/bk375/page/n32/mode/1up

2002-12 -The Tale of Hidden Pir -ISIM (375)

India
CLAUDIA PRECKEL

Wahhabi or National Hero? Siddiq Hasan Khan

Hardly is any historical Indian Muslim figure of the 19th century as controversial as Sayyid Siddiq Hasan Khan al-Qannauji al-Bukhari (1832–1890). The reason for all the contrasting assessments of his personality was his astonishing career: he rose from an impoverished scholar to the son-in-law of the Prime Minister at the court of Bhopal.[1] In 1871, the widowed ruler of this principality, Shah Jahan Begum (r. 1868–1901) chose him as her second husband. After his marriage, Siddiq Hasan Khan established the reformist movement Ahl-e Hadith (people of the prophetic traditions), which soon became a dominant Muslim group in Bhopal. But as soon as Siddiq Hasan's career had started, it came to a sudden end.

Siddiq Hasan Khan

In 1885, Siddiq Hasan was deprived of all his posts and titles by the British, thus forcing him into privacy. For a period of more than one year, he had to retire in his own palace, Nur Mahall, completely isolated from his wife and his supporters. Due to this sudden end of his career, in the Indian nationalist views prevalent since 1918 Siddiq Hasan is described as one of the first heroes of the anti-colonial struggle.

This nationalist paradigm is overshadowed by another perspective about the historical figure of Siddiq Hasan: several Muslim sources describe him as a puritan and a Wahhabi, closely linked to the reformist movement of Muhammad ʿAbd al-Wahhab (d. 1762) in today's Saudi Arabia. Besides these contrasting views, the sources lack an assessment of the 'real' Siddiq Hasan. As a consequence, it is necessary to apply changing research methods in order 'to avoid common pitfalls of historiography, like projecting modern nationalist paradigms … back into the past'.[2] Consequently, the social network analysis, originally developed by the Manchester school of anthropologists in the 1950s, seems to be a suitable research method. Taken the premise that every individual (ego) is embedded into a network of personal relationships, it is interesting to observe which parts of his/her ego-network a person activates in order to achieve his/her aims. Hence, it may be interesting to show which personal relations were really important in Siddiq Hasan's career – and which connections became crucial only to the eyes of posterity. The following gives an analysis of Siddiq Hasan's personal networks, trying to avoid the categories of 'Wahhabi' or 'nationalist hero', which have determined the characterization of Siddiq Hasan for more than 100 years.

Born into a Sayyid family, strongly connected to the Tariqa-ye Muhammadiya reform movement of Sayyid Ahmad Barelwi (d. 1832), Siddiq Hasan made the first steps of his personal career as the secretary of the Prime Minister at the court of the Islamic principality of Bhopal. Since 1818 this Central Indian princely state was ruled by strong female rulers, the Begums. Sikander Begum (r. 1844–1868) followed her mother Qudsiya Begum (r. 1818–1837) to the throne (*masnad*) and secured the succession of her daughter, Shah Jahan Begum (r. 1868–1901). Sikander Begum, on the one hand, needed support from the British to protect Bhopal's territory from the invasions of the Marathas and Pindaris. On the other hand, she wanted to have her reign legitimated by a group of Islamic scholars. Thus, she invited several ulama of reformist background to Bhopal. Among them was Sayyid Jamal ud-Din Dihlawi (d. 1881) who had been, like Siddiq Hasan's father, an active member of the Tariqa-ye Muhammadiya.

The 'Yemen connection'

When young Siddiq Hasan approached Bhopal, Jamal ud-Din took him under his wing. Due to the fact that from now on he lived in financially secure conditions, he could continue his personal studies, which he had had to interrupt before. In Bhopal he came to know two Yemenite brothers who had been living in Bhopal for several years, namely the brothers Zain al-ʿAbidin (d. 1880) and Husain b. Muhsin al-Hudaidi (d. 1910). Sikander Begum had met the Yeminite family in Hudaida during her pilgrimage to Mecca in 1863. She invited Zain al-ʿAbidin to Bhopal, because she was looking for a new *qadi al-qudat* (chief judge) for her state.

Although Zain al-ʿAbidin did not know Persian or Urdu, nor did he belong to the Hanafi school of law prevailing among the Indian Muslims (he was a Shafiʿi), he soon became acquainted with the situation in Bhopal. After a short time, he knew all relevant manuals of Hanafi law in India and wrote his legal decrees (*fatawa*) according to that school. Later, he invited his younger brother Husain to join him in Bhopal. Husain decided to undertake the long journey to Bhopal, where the Begum cordially welcomed him. She employed him as a teacher of the local *dar ul-hadith* (house of the teaching of the prophetic traditions). It was around 1856, that Husain taught *hadith* to Siddiq Hasan. This close teacher-pupil relation made a deep impression on Siddiq Hasan and caused a significant change in his intellectual orientation. The reason for this change can be seen in his studies of various famous books by the reputed Yemenite scholar and *qadi* Muhammad b. ʿAli ash-Shaukani (d. 1834), who gained fame mainly for his legal theories of rejecting the *taqlid*, i.e. the strict adherence to one school of law. Shaukani insisted on the *ijtihad*, i.e. to find the proof (*dalil*, pl. *adilla*) of a legal opinion in the Qur'an and *sunna*. Shaukani applied the method of *ijtihad* in his own *fatawa*, collected in his voluminous *Nail al-autar*. Shaukani's works, all of them containing heavy criticism on *taqlid*, spread all over India starting from the late 1850s. The Yemenite brothers in Bhopal as well as Siddiq Hasan were responsible for this 'Shaukani boom'. Siddiq Hasan, formerly influenced by the teachings of Shah Waliullah (d. 1762) and Sayyid Ahmad Barelwi, shifted to the Yemenite tradition of Shaukani and Husain b. Muhsin. Husain wrote several *ijazat* (teaching permissions) to him, which allowed him to teach several works of this Yemenite tradition (e.g. by the Ahdal family, the Mizjajis, and mainly Shaukani).

At this time, around 1857, Siddiq Hasan was a young scholar with limited influence. He even lost his job as a secretary to the Prime Minister and had to leave Bhopal. Later on, in 1859, he was allowed to return to Bhopal and was appointed Head of the Bhopal State Archives by Sikander Begum. His career gained further impetus when he married the widowed daughter of the Prime Minister Jamal ud-Din Khan. From that time onwards, Siddiq Hasan was one of the most influential scholars in Bhopal. His career reached its climax when the widowed ruler Shah Jahan Begum made him her Nawwab-consort in 1871. Siddiq Hasan started extensive propagation of the theories of Shaukani, Ibn Taimiya, and to a lesser extent the opinions of Sayyid Ahmad Barelwi. This mixture of Indian and Yemenite religious reformist teachings became fundamental to the Ahl-e Hadith movement, of which Siddiq Hasan was one of the most active members. He wrote almost 300 works in Arabic, Persian, and Urdu dealing with the elimination of unlawful innovations (*bidʿa*), the upcoming approach of the Day of Judgement (*yaum al-qiyama*) and the need for reform of the Indian society according to the model of the early Islamic community in Medina. It was mainly the insistence on *ijtihad* that caused conflicts among all Indian Muslim groups of that time, e.g. the Deobandis and the movement of Ahmad Riza Khan Barelwi (d. 1921), who were all strict followers of the Hanafiya.

Siddiq Hasan's enemies in Bhopal's as well as in other Muslim circles chose the easy way to get rid of him: they denounced him as a 'Wahhabi', which was synonymous with 'anti-British', 'fanatic', and 'puritan'. At first, the British did not believe these rumours, mainly because the Begums proved to be loyal supporters of the British in several critical situations. Later, the British began to examine Siddiq Hasan's books critically and discovered some writings in which the theory of jihad was explained at length. When the British further detected that 17 'Wahhabi' scholars from Najd had come to study in Bhopal, they began to think of an international network of anti-British agitators, reaching from Bhopal to Egypt, Istanbul, and the Mahdist Sudan. The British Resident Lepel Griffin immediately reacted and deposed Siddiq Hasan. Other prominent leaders of the Ahl-e Hadith like Husain b. Muhsin and Muhammad Bashir Sahsawani (d. 1908) further propagated the objectives of the movement. This points to the fact that some people at the court of Bhopal only wanted to eradicate Siddiq Hasan's dominant influence on the Begum. Nationalist circles, however, had labelled their hero as 'a victim of the British imperialism'. At first, the British were proud to have caught 'one of the leading figures of the Indian Wahhabis'. Later they had to admit that they had overreacted to intrigues and rumours circulating at the court.

Every group mentioned above neglected completely that Siddiq Hasan in his works had always denied Muhammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhab's influence on the Indian reformists. Rather, he had accused the Najdi of religious fanaticism and bloodshed among fellow Muslims. Siddiq Hasan himself was far away from being an anti-British agitator: he did not support the Mahdist revolt in Sudan and did not even justify Islamic jihad against the British in India. He opted for a close cooperation of Muslim rulers and the British authorities within the framework of Islamic *sharīʿa*.

All in all, Siddiq Hasan was a reformer who gained most of his religious knowledge from his Yemenite teachers. His link to Yemenite scholarship even overshadowed his connection to Indian reformist circles into which he was born. The combination of the analysis of Siddiq Hasan's oeuvre and that of his social network is the objective of the further research concerning this subject.

Notes

1. Claudia Preckel, *The Begums of Bhopal* (New Delhi, 2000); Shaharyar Muhammad Khan, *The Begums of Bhopal* (London, 2000).
2. Thomas Eich, 'Quest for a Phantom: Investigating Abu Hudaifa al-Sayyadi', *ISIM Newsletter* 7 (2001): 24.

Claudia Preckel, M.A., is currently working on her Ph.D. dissertation on Siddiq Hasan Khan and the emergence of the Ahl-e Hadith in Bhopal. She is member of the Junior Research Group 'Islamic Networks in Local and Transnational Contexts, 18th–20th Centuries' at the Ruhr-University Bochum, Germany.
E-mail: claudia@preckel.org

Link: http://www.realpatidar.com/library
email: mail@realpatidar.com

https://archive.org/details/bk375/page/n33/mode/1up

2002-12 -The Tale of Hidden Pir -ISIM (375)

East Africa

XAVIER LUFFIN

Colonialism and Muslim Mobility

The European attitude towards the Muslims in East and Central Africa can be seen in two different, almost antithetic phases. The first one covers the exploration and the conquest periods, when Muslim traders helped Europeans to reach the most remote areas and Muslim soldiers were enlisted as indigenous soldiers. The second phase covers the settling period, when Muslims were almost rejected from society. Both were closely related to the Europeans' perception of the African and Arab cultures.

Since the very beginning of their arrival in Central Africa, the Europeans were in contact with 'Arabs' (in European sources, 'Arab' often refers to Muslims as a whole, including Asians, Swahilis, and 'half-cast' Arab-Africans). Every explorer's diary mentions the presence of these ivory- and slave-traders, even in remote areas like Manyema (Eastern Congo). The presence of Arab (and Persian) traders on the East African Coast goes back to the 10th century, and their contacts with the African population gave birth to the well-known Swahili culture. In 1840, the Omani Sultan even decided to transfer his capital from Mascate to Zanzibar. They were in contact with the Nyamwezi and Yao African traders, who seem to have penetrated the inland since the 18th century. Using these people as guides, Arab traders followed the same path in the first half of the 19th century and went deeper and deeper into the Dark Continent in order to find ivory and slaves. This created a Muslim society composed of different communities. Some of them were of Omani descent, having settled on Zanzibar and the East African coast since generations, but it included also Persians, Indians, and Baluchis as well as Swahilis and other 'mixed' Arab-Africans. Finally, the so-called Wangwana, literally 'freemen', constituted local Muslim African tribes.

Arab blood, African blood

When the first Europeans decided to explore the forests of Central Africa, the area was already well known to Muslim traders. That is why most of the European expeditions departed from Zanzibar and Bagamoyo, where they could find carriers and soldiers but above all guides that knew the roads, the habits, the material needs, and the languages of the local population. On the road, they could also benefit from the information given by the ivory- and slave-traders. That is why 'Arabs' and Muslims were quite well considered by the European explorers; yet that was not the only reason. The European mentality of the last century firmly considered that the world's population was divided in different cultural levels: Westerners were of course the most civilized nations and the Africans were nothing but savages. The Arabs stood obviously in between: Arabo-Islamic contribution to civilization was recognized, even if the relations between Europe and Muslims have not always been easy. This conception influenced the way they were considering the Arabs in Africa.

It is interesting to notice that the Arabs described by the explorers are almost systematically compared to the Africans: the latter are depicted as nude or half nude, lazy, stupid, cowardly, and ugly. Arabs, on the other hand, are well dressed, proud, noble, but also cruel and cunning. Descriptions of mulattos are even more interesting: they inherited their good characteristics – whether physical or intellectual – from their Arab ascent and the negative ones – often limited to their physical features – come from their African blood.

The information gathered by the European explorers about Africa reached Europe, and some European governments – Belgium, Germany, and Great Britain – decided to colonize these new territories. At the beginning, Europeans continued to see Muslims as potential allies in a totally new world.

Military, politics, and religion

Germany – which ruled Tanganyika (Tanzania), Burundi, and Rwanda until 1918 – seems to have been the more open-minded towards the Muslim communities. They adopted Kiswahili – which was then closely associated with Muslim culture – as an official language in their territories, which attracted a lot of Muslims to work in the administration as well as the local army and police. The fact that the Germans founded a city like Bujumbura also attracted many Muslim merchants. At the beginning of the 20th century, Johanssen, a missionary, considered that it was the German colonial administration itself that opened Rwanda to Islam. And when Germany had to leave the administration of both Rwanda and Burundi to Belgium, the majority of the inhabitants of Bujumbura, Burundi's capital, were Muslims. Most of them were not Burundians, but Swahilis, Arabs, Indians, and Congolese.

In the last decades of the 19th century, the British chose Muslim 'tribes' to help them conquer or rule East Africa: Zanzibari, Sudanese, Somali, Swahili, and later even Indian troops. Yet, after the Sudanese mutiny of 1897, British officers decided to diversify their recruitment and enlisted more and more local soldiers, like Baganda and later Acholi. Of course, most of these soldiers, sometimes accompanied by their wives, settled down where they were brought by their British officers. For instance, Captain Lugard enlisted 'Nubi' soldiers from Southern Sudan and brought them to Uganda. Actually, these warriors belonged to various Muslim populations originating from Southern Sudan. Later, they continued to serve the British Crown and went to Kenya, Tanzania, and even Somalia. Nowadays, their descendants still live in these countries. Some of them continued to serve the British Crown during the two World Wars and even helped the British colonial troops to fight the Mau Mau rebellion. In the same way, today most of the inhabitants of Isiolo, Kenya, are the grandsons of Somali soldiers enrolled in Kismayo and Aden during the First World War.

But if those Muslim tribes were well considered by the colonial rulers for their military purposes, they had to stay away from any political aspirations. The main reason for this segregation was the religious factor itself: the British wanted to favour Protestant Africans, through education as well as selection for local power. In Uganda for instance, Muslims – and Catholics – were soon marginalized and they were denied access to some political posts and even chieftaincies. On the Swahili coast, the British tried to emphasize the Arab origin of the Muslims in order to make Islam look like an alien element, despite its presence in East Africa since many centuries. For instance, colonial law did not consider the Arabs, Abyssinians, Baluchis, Somalis, Comorians, and Malagasies of Kenya as 'natives', even though they had been there for generations.

In the beginning, the Belgians also recruited many Muslims to the army. Between 1874 and 1900, many mercenaries were enrolled to help King Leopold II's officers 'conquer' the Congo Free State (Etat Indépendant du Congo). At first, they mainly came from Zanzibar. Later, Somalis, Ethiopians, Hausas, West Africans, and even Sudanese were enlisted. In 1894, some of these Sudanese left Congo and were recruited by the British in Uganda.

Due to the political influence of the Swahili merchants in Eastern Congo, the colonial administration even gave them some administrative posts. In 1887, Stanley appointed Tippo-Tip, a famous Zanzibari slave-trader, as governor of Stanley Falls (now Kisangani). But the Arab and Swahili merchants quickly understood that the Belgians did not aim to share anything and that they had to fight if they wanted to keep their power in Eastern Congo. Between 1892 and 1895, several battles opposed Europeans and 'Arabs'. A couple of years later, colonial troops fought against the Sudanese Mahdists in the northern province. The Europeans finally won those conflicts and put a term to any Muslim political influence. This was the start of a radical change in the nature of the relations between both communities, the former allies becoming enemies.

But the major element explaining the change of attitude towards Muslims is the role played by the Church, whether Catholic or Protestant. The missionaries had been active since the exploration phase, yet their impact grew considerably during the settling period due to their monopoly on the education system. Missionaries were afraid of Islam, seen as a serious rival in the area, and they had to fight its spread by all means. In the 1880s, the Church organized a campaign in Europe against the slave trade in Africa. This also had a strong impact on the way Muslims were seen, although it often – not always – was a political tool more than a real humanistic feeling in the colonial administration. After that, Belgian authorities were very suspicious towards the Muslims and this until the Independence of Congo. A report about Manyema's Muslims issued in 1959 – one year before the Independence – underlines the way Muslims were systematically harassed by authorities: building of new mosques and introduction of religious books as well as Islamic education in general were forbidden. Arrival of alien Muslims – seen as potential predicators – was made difficult. Nevertheless, Muslim merchants coming from West Africa or from British East Africa were numerous in the region.

In the first decades of the 20th century, the widespread idea that Muslim Africans were more educated, more civilized, and were better fighters helped Muslims to move easily inside the European colonies. Yet, the very same reasons for their inclusion later excluded them from society. But the colonial administration still needed many hands to exploit 'their' territories. They thus began to favour some of the local peoples, with whom they also began to become better acquainted. For instance, the Belgian administration moved numerous Baluba from Kasai to Katanga province and Rwandans to Kivu in order to exploit those rich areas. In the same way, they enlisted the Bangala in the army because they considered them as the best warriors.

So, the relationship between Muslim communities and colonial powers was an ambiguous one. Muslims were seen as materially and culturally more developed than the other Africans, and thus as more valuable interlocutors. But this meant, too, that they could eventually have a kind of influence on the local populations, whether in religion or in politics. The colonial powers quickly understood that the most efficient way to diminish this potential influence was to make Islam and Muslims into an alien culture, not only different but even opposed to African values.

realpatidar.com

Xavier Luffin teaches Arabic at the Université Libre de Bruxelles and the Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Belgium.
E-mail: xluffin@ulb.ac.be

https://archive.org/details/bk375/page/n34/mode/1up

2002-12 -The Tale of Hidden Pir -ISIM (375)

United States
JOEL BEININ

Neo-Conservatives Threaten Academic Freedom

The 11 September attacks on the United States created an opportunity for the denizens of neo-conservative and Israel-oriented think-tanks to exploit the legitimate fears of the American people and launch a campaign aimed at imposing a new orthodoxy on what may be thought and said about the Middle East, especially on university campuses. So far, this campaign has had only a limited impact. But students and scholars with dissident opinions, especially those of Middle Eastern origins, are feeling some pressure to lower their profiles and conform.

Shortly after 11 September Martin Kramer, former director of the Dayan Center for Middle East Studies at Tel Aviv University, published a lengthy screed condemning the entire field of Middle East studies in North America: *Ivory Towers on Sand: The Failure of Middle East Studies in America*. Kramer alleges that the 'mandarins' of the Middle East Studies Association of North America (MESA) have imposed an intellectual and political orthodoxy inspired by Edward Said's *Orientalism*. Among the disabilities of American Middle East studies, according to Kramer, was the failure to predict the 11 September attacks and to warn the American public about the dangers of radical Islam. Kramer was acclaimed in the predictable political circles. But few scholars have taken his arguments seriously.

In response to questions raised on university campuses about the need to launch a war against Afghanistan following the 11 September attacks, the American Council of Trustees and Alumni (ACTA) issued a report entitled 'Defending Civilization: How Our Universities Are Failing America and What Can Be Done about It'.[1] ACTA's founder and Chairperson Emerita, Lynne Cheney, is the wife of Vice-President Dick Cheney; and the former Democratic vice-presidential candidate, Senator Joseph Lieberman, is a member of its National Council. A lengthy quote by Ms Cheney appears on the cover of the report, suggesting that she supports its contents and giving the document the appearance of a quasi-official statement of government policy.

ACTA's report asserts that 'our universities are failing America' because of inadequate teaching of Western culture and American history. The original appendix to the report lists 117 university faculty members, staff, and students who ACTA alleges are negligent in 'defending civilization' (the names were excised after ACTA was criticized for compiling a black list). ACTA's catalogue of unacceptable speech includes my comment that, '[i]f Usama Bin Laden is confirmed to be behind the attacks, the United States should bring him before an international tribunal on charges of crimes against humanity'. Among the other items cited are '[i]gnorance breeds hate' and 'there needs to be an understanding of why this kind of suicidal violence could be undertaken against our country'.

Policing dissent

The attack on American universities in the name of 'defending civilization' was a ruse for ACTA's real agenda: suppressing any form of dissent from the Bush administration's policy in response to the 11 September attacks. Thus, ACTA regarded as inherently suspect the call to understand better why some people in other lands hate the United States enough to kill themselves to harm Americans.

In March 2002, former Secretary of Education and 'Drug Czar' William Bennett launched Americans for Victory over Terrorism (AVOT). AVOT aims to 'take to task those who blame America first and who do not understand – or who are unwilling to defend – our fundamental principles'. On 10 March Bennett published an open letter as an advertisement in the *New York Times* describing the external and internal threats to the United States. According to AVOT, the external threat comprises 'radical Islamists and others'. The internal threat consists of 'those who are attempting to use this opportunity to promulgate their agenda of "blame America first"'. AVOT's list of internal enemies includes former President Jimmy Carter because he criticized George Bush's 'axis of evil' concept as 'overly simplistic' and 'counter-productive', as well as congressional representatives Dennis Kucinich (Democrat, Cleveland) and Maxine Waters (Democrat, Los Angeles).

Another effort to police dissent specifically targets those who teach Middle East studies on university campuses. The Middle East Forum, a think-tank run by Daniel Pipes and supportive of the Israeli right wing, established a website pretentiously called Campus Watch. Campus Watch claims to 'monitor and gather information on professors who fan the flames of disinformation, incitement, and ignorance'. Campus Watch alleges that Middle East scholars 'seem generally to dislike their own country and think even less of American allies abroad. They portray US policy in an unfriendly light and disparage allies.' Campus Watch asserts that 'Middle East studies in the United States has become the preserve of Middle Eastern Arabs, who have brought their views with them. Membership in the Middle East Studies Association (MESA), the main scholarly association, is now 50 per cent of Middle Eastern origin.'

These assertions are maliciously false. Expressing dissent from prevailing foreign policy is no indication of whether one does or does not like the United States. The majority of the members of MESA are not of Middle Eastern origin. Moreover, casting aspersions on scholars because of their national origin violates the most basic democratic traditions of the United States and is a form of racism.

The sloppy thinking of Harvard University President Lawrence Summers is another bad omen for the future of free debate on Middle East-related issues at US universities. At the start of the current academic year he addressed a student prayer meeting and argued that harsh criticisms of Israel were 'anti-Semitic in their effect if not their intent'.[2] Among other things, Summers was referring to a petition signed by 600 Harvard and MIT faculty, staff, and students to divest university funds from companies that do business in Israel as a protest against Israel's continuing occupation of the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, and East Jerusalem. Similar efforts have been launched at some forty campuses. Whatever one thinks of this political demand, it is not anti-Semitic.

By contrast, the administration and faculty of the University of North Carolina resisted efforts to dictate their curriculum. The university was sued in court by the Family Policy Network, a Christian right group, because it assigned Michael Sells's translation and interpretation of the early verses of the Qur'an, *Approaching the Qur'an: The Early Revelations*, as summer reading for all incoming first-year students. Family Policy Network's president, Joe Goover, argued that '[b]y forcing students to read a single text about Islam that leaves out any mention of other passages of the Koran in which Muslim terrorists find justification for killing non-Muslims, the university establishes a particular mind-set for its students about the nature of Islam. This constitutes religious indoctrination [which is] forbidden by the Supreme Court.'[3]

Daniel Pipes jumped on the bandwagon and assailed the university for obscuring the violent character of Islam. Thus, the University of North Carolina became one of the first institutions featured on Campus Watch. However, the university won the legal case, and the reading and discussion programme went forward.

Delegitimizing critical reflection

It is not coincidental that these efforts to police the boundaries of acceptable opinion about Islam, the Middle East, and US policy in the Middle East emerged following the 11 September attacks and as the Bush administration was launching a drive to war against Iraq. There is a clear political agenda behind these efforts. AVOT is funded primarily by Lawrence Kadish, chairman of the Republican Jewish Coalition, which has long tried to bring Jews into the Republican Party. Martin Kramer is a visiting fellow at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy (WINEP) – the most influential of the Israel-oriented think-tanks in Washington – which published his book. In addition to directing the Middle East Forum, Daniel Pipes is a WINEP adjunct scholar. Campus Watch appears to be inspired by Kramer's book. Although Kramer is not directly involved in Campus Watch, he has issued a statement supporting its aims. Richard Perle, Chairman of the Defense Policy Board, is a member of WINEP's Board of Advisors, as was Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz, before he joined the Bush administration. Perle and Wolfowitz are the intellectual leaders of the 'chicken hawks' who have provided the rationale for the Bush administration's drive to war with Iraq.

The activities of ACTA, AVOT, Campus Watch, and their fellow travellers recall the era of Senator Joseph McCarthy, when Hollywood actors and writers, trade union leaders, politicians, and university faculty members were branded as un-American communist sympathizers. McCarthy and his followers succeeded in narrowing the range of American political debate and cultural expression, and in depriving many innocent people of their careers and livelihoods. The assault on Middle East and Islamic studies has comparable objectives: to delegitimize critical reflection on US Middle East policy and nuanced understandings of contemporary Islamic social and political movements, and to harness the study of Islam and the Middle East to the most narrowly construed interests of the national security apparatus.

Tenured faculty members do not generally risk losing their jobs. However, in December 2001, Sami al-Arian, an associate professor of computer science at the University of South Florida, was threatened with termination after being of accused of being a terrorist sympathizer on a notorious right-wing television programme. Professor al-Arian is of Palestinian origin and has been an Islamic activist for the Palestine cause outside of the classroom. His case is still under adjudication. So far, there are no similar cases involving professors of Islamic or Middle East Studies. But graduate students and untenured faculty are likely to feel intimidated, especially if university administrations do not firmly resist the pressures from the neo-conservative right. Such resistance will be difficult because the campaign to delegitimize dissent and narrow the range of acceptable thought comes from circles close to the Bush administration. If university administrators capitulate, the lack of understanding of Islam and the Middle East in the United States will become even more entrenched than is already the case.

Notes

1. http://www.goacta.org/Reports/defciv.pdf
2. Lawrence Summers, 'Address at Morning Prayers', Memorial Church, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 17 September 2002. (http://president.harvard.edu/speeches/2002/morningprayers.html).
3. Joe Glover, 'Book Fails to Tell Whole Truth', *USA Today*, 8 August 2002, editorial (http://www.usatoday.com/news).

Joel Beinin is professor of Middle East History at Stanford University and past president of the Middle East Studies Association of North America. His latest book is Workers and Peasants in the Modern Middle East *(Cambridge University Press, 2001).*
E-mail: Beinin@stanford.edu

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

Harvard Law School Fellowships

The Islamic Legal Studies Program (ILSP) of Harvard Law School invites applications for its 2003–4 visiting scholar fellowships. Applications will be accepted from individuals with a range of backgrounds, traditions, and scholarly interests. Fellowships are both stipendiary and non-stipendiary, and available for doctoral candidates as well as for more advanced scholars and practitioners. Please contact us or consult our website for details of the fellowship and the formal application process. The deadline is 1 February 2003.

ILSP
Pound Hall 501
Harvard Law School
Cambridge, MA 02138, USA
E-mail: ilsp@law.harvard.edu
www.law.harvard.edu/programs/ILSP

Link: http://www.realpatidar.com/library
email: mail@realpatidar.com

https://archive.org/details/bk375/page/n35/mode/1up

2002-12 -The Tale of Hidden Pir -ISIM (375)

Europe
RENÉ ROMER

Advertising and Changing Demographics

Is European advertising a mirror of the demographics of the European societies? The answer seems to be no. But is it? The limited number of cases where advertisers do promote their products and services to Asian, Arab, African, or Latin American Europeans most probably reflects the importance that European nations attach to integrating these various ethnic communities in their societies.

The European landscape is changing rapidly. Europe has become an immigration continent – a continent in which the Judaeo-Christian and humanist traditions are enriched with new Islamic and Hindu dimensions. Many European citizens have not yet adapted to these rapidly changing demographics.

The increasing cultural diversity of European consumers also impacts businesses. Candy producers like Haribo and Van Melle are substituting their meat-produced gelatine with alternative substances making it suitable for the halal and kosher markets. Several financial companies now market targeted insurance and investment products such as funeral insurances to cover the transport of the deceased abroad – for those of the relevant faith, the ritual washing of the body before transport is included. Some health insurers cover the costs for male circumcision, while a few banks offer Islamic investment products. However, in most instances such fundamental adaptations will not be required. What is needed, however, is adapting the ways in which we advertise for these products.

© NEDERLANDSE SPOORWEGEN, 2001

A still from an advertising campaign by the Dutch Railways.

Why have fundamental adaptations in advertising not taken place? Why is cultural diversity in advertising considered on an incidental rather than a structural basis? A possible explanation could be that advertisers have for too long been looking at what separates ethnic communities instead of what binds them. The consequence is that marketers end up with too many niche markets. Since advertising budgets do not allow for addressing every niche market efficiently, marketers focus on the most substantial segments: in other words, 'the average consumer'. And the average consumer in Europe is predominantly white.

Ethnic marketing

On a small scale, targeted marketing and communication towards specific ethnic communities was introduced in Europe in the early 1990s. Ethnic marketing consultants advised advertisers to develop targeted ethnic campaigns because the different communities were said to be too different from the regular consumer. Marketers were advised, for example, 'not to use the white colour in advertising for the Moroccan community, because white is the colour of mourning'. Amongst the other suggestions were that 'Caribbeans consider yellow to be a colour of happiness'; 'young blacks think blue is a dull colour'; and 'in print advertising for the Turkish community one should use a lot of pictures and few words'. Ethnic marketing agencies often promoted their businesses by emphasizing the differences between communities.

In recent years, we notice a change in the way we tend to look at the markets. Marketers start to realize that a growing number of Asian, Arab, African, or Latin American Europeans are *primarily* Europeans. They might be Europeans with a double orientation – an orientation towards the country of residence and an orientation towards the culture of the country of birth or their (grand)parents' birth – but they *are* Europeans. Many are born and raised in Europe. They go to school in Europe, fall in love, get married, and raise children, all *inside* Europe – not as Asians or Africans, but as *European* citizens.

As European citizens, people watch Arab and Asian television networks such as Al-Jazeera, Zee TV, or B4U, but these same Europeans enjoy BBC, Sky, ZDF, Antenne 2, or TVE. An Asian-British citizen may watch the Asian-British networks Prime TV and Reminiscent TV, but on the same evening pick up BBC's news headlines. As Europeans, consumers read the *Daily Jang*, *Nimrooz*, *Sing Tao Daily*, or *al-Ahram*, while these same Europeans read *The Independent*, *Bild Zeitung*, *Le Figaro*, or any other European newspaper. It is not uncommon for a Turkish-Dutch citizen to start the day by reading both the Dutch *Metro* newspaper and the Turkish daily *Hürriyet*. Indeed, diversity has become the core of European societies.

Local values

As we have seen here, the European consumer becomes more diverse by the day. But the majority of those in the European advertising sector tend to look at the consumer as white, or at least as Caucasian. Even the ever-increasing local ethnic media landscape in many European countries is not considered by most advertisers as worth spending part their media budgets on.

If advertisers do end up focusing on the biggest segments, as we have seen before, can they not give a more balanced representation of Europe's changing demographics in their general advertising? Yes they can, and a small but growing number of advertisers already do manage to cope with the multicultural dilemmas with which they are faced.

In many countries, advertisers use local values to promote their products and services. But do these traditional local values still do their job in a culturally diverse society? Do such values appeal to those with 'foreign' ethnic roots? In most cases, the answer is no. In the Netherlands in the early 1990s, the peanut butter brand Calvé used the motto 'Who has not grown up with Calvé?' For millions of Dutch citizens with a non-Dutch ethnic background, it was easy to say 'I did not grow up with Calvé!' A few years later, the motto was changed into 'How tall do you want to grow?' Without abandoning its brand value 'energy to grow', it suddenly extended its target audience to include ethnic communities that had not grown up with Calvé peanut butter.

A European dream?

Sometimes, however, local values can work: the 'American dream', for example. Before 9/11, the American dream was indeed a dream for many – but not all – ethnic cultural communities in and even outside the United States. Is there such an equivalent in Europe for the American dream: a European dream, or a British, French, or Dutch dream, which is universal for all ethnic cultural communities living in Europe? The question, unfortunately, cannot be answered positively. This does not, however, obstruct advertisers in finding universal values. Diesel jeans' motto 'for successful living' has been effective in many countries and for many cultures. The 'family values' of the global brand Western Union Money Transfer is another fine example.

As we have just seen with Calvé peanut butter, our good examples are not limited to global brands only. In recent years we have seen some excellent advertising campaigns for local brands, going one step further than Calvé. The Dutch mobile phone brand Ben is one. Ben promotes values of 'individuality' and 'straightforwardness'. In advertising, these values are always linked to individuals, whether they are white or black, Muslim or Christian, young or old. Ordinary people are the heroes of communication. Amongst the many interesting examples, two television commercials certainly stand out.

The one commercial shows a young Muslim girl in front of the mirror before leaving the house. She is binding her hair together and puts on her scarf, while her father is proudly glancing at her. After covering herself, she picks up her mobile to go. But before she leaves, she slips her mobile into a phone pouch, protecting both herself and her precious phone. In another commercial, we see an office department. All employees are quietly working on their computers. Suddenly one employee receives an sms message. After reading the message, the man starts dancing around the department waving a Turkish flag. Apparently, the Turkish national football team has just won its latest match. When putting the flag away and taking his seat again, he kisses his mobile and starts working.

Another brand-awareness commercial that stands out is that of the Dutch cheese brand Uniekaas. Their motto 'unique cheese for unique people' successfully matches the traditional Dutch values represented in butter and cheese with all Dutch citizens of a foreign mother tongue. In the commercial we find an Arab-Dutch family having breakfast while the mother tells the child what mothers in the Netherlands traditionally do: 'first you have a savoury sandwich, then you have a sweet sandwich'. Of course, the mother speaks in Arabic. The motto remains the same: 'unique cheese for unique people'.

In other European countries we find interesting examples as well. In the United Kingdom, targeted services in a number of Asian languages were promoted by radio commercials and print advertising in five different Asian languages. The British Army made use of famous Asian personalities such as Naseem Hamed to create the image of a dynamic, modern, and young organization for which to work. Other famous Asian and Afro-Caribbean British were cast to promote products and services as well, such as Meera Syal, Ian Wright, and Frank Bruno. In France a chatting Asian-French woman was cast to promote the Tchatche service of France Telecom. The SNCF (the French Railways) made use of testimonials of commuters with a wide variety of ethnic backgrounds. The children's fashion brand Natalys cast a young black child for its advertising, while Universal Music contracted Jamel Debbouze and Omar et Fred as spokespersons.

These are some examples of commercials where the advertising sector is apparently far ahead of politicians when it comes to the acceptance of cultural diversity as the new standard in the European societies. Unfortunately, these are still exceptions. Just like Europe, the advertising sector as a whole does not yet mirror the changing European demographics as an integral part of their business. These examples are proof, however, that the advertising world can play a major role in presenting a European society that has changed forever. Even though there have been setbacks since 9/11, the growing diversity in European societies cannot be put to a halt. Most large advertising agencies are located in Europe's major cities such as London, Paris, and Amsterdam. These are all cities in which the population is growing more diverse by the day and since the 'colour' of the workforce in Europe's leading advertising agencies is likely to change sooner rather than later, advertising will in the future most definitely adapt to these new European realities.

realpatidar.com

René Romer is strategy director with TBWA\Direct Company, a leading advertising agency in Amsterdam. Romer is specialized in diversity marketing and is author of the book Thuis in Nederland *(At Home in the Netherlands), a practical handbook on diversity marketing.*
E-mail: rene.romer@tbwa.nl

https://archive.org/details/bk375/page/n36/mode/1up

2002-12 -The Tale of Hidden Pir -ISIM (375)

The Mediterranean

HENK DRIESSEN

A Seaward View on a Transitional Region

In the last few years there has been an upsurge of scholarly interest in the circum-Mediterranean area as part of a wider academic movement to rethink and revitalize area studies. As a transitional zone the Mediterranean area has always had a somewhat uncertain, marginal, and ambivalent position in the field of established area specializations, which until recently were defined by rather rigid and arbitrary geo-political boundaries. 'The Middle East', a product of the strategic thinking of 19th-century 'Europe' (itself a problematic category), is a case in point. Scholars, in particular anthropologists, working in the Middle East and North Africa have often studied this region as detached from the wider Mediterranean world. One good reason to correct this myopic perspective is to be found in the basic fact that the Mediterranean region has been the breeding ground of globalization and cosmopolitanism in which the sea played a major role.

PHOTO: SIMON BRACKEN, © LONELY PLANET

Beach scene at the port of Alexandria.

Anthropologists and to a lesser extent geographers and historians have largely avoided the Mediterranean Sea as if they suffered from hydrophobia. Almost all statements on Mediterranean unity, in which the sea is seen as the connection between peoples, cultures, and societies, and Mediterranean diversity, in which the sea is conceived as a barrier, are based on research conducted in the interior rather than in the coastlands. This is all the more striking because Mediterranean seaports, with their ethnic trading minorities, have for more than two thousand years been hubs in networks with connections to other regions. Not only the anthropological but also the geographical perspective has been marked by terracentrism. Though this inland orientation is hardly surprising, it is nevertheless biased.[1]

The study of the circum-Mediterranean area, with an emphasis on *circum*, should not neglect the sea, because it has made possible a relatively easy transport of people, goods, and ideas. The primacy of the sea and of a maritime focus is thus a matter of logical priority determined by the sea's central position in a network of connections, even in the present age of fast communication by air, satellite, and cable. Of all seas and oceans, the Mediterranean has the longest documented history of human interaction. Recent genetic, archaeological, linguistic, and anthropological research has demonstrated that pre-neolithic exchange occurred between the northern and southern shores. The recent finding of a series of early-palaeolithic flint tools on Sardinia indicates that more than 300,000 years ago Homo Erectus was able to travel short distances over sea.

The sea as social space

One of the topics deserving more attention concerns the relationships of Mediterranean peoples, past and present, with the sea. This theme involves perceptions, classifications, and exploitations of the sea. During its long documented history the Inner Sea was often attributed an ambiguous and sometimes altogether negative role in Mediterranean cosmologies. Until the 18th century, when a significant change of attitude towards the sea took place, particularly on the northern shores, it mostly inspired fear and abhorrence. Several Ancient Greek and Roman thinkers saw it as a corrupting sea, the easy communications being felt as a threat to the integrity of social order. However, at the same time the Inner Sea was *mare nostrum*, an integral part of the imperial territory and identity. In the Old Testament the sea is depicted as a plumbless and dark depth hosting the wreckage of the Flood, an empire of chaos, monsters, and demons. In the eyes of the Church Fathers, especially Augustine, the sea was both a source of life and a realm of death. In spite of its storms and torments, it made possible Paul's missionary travels and thus the spread of the Christian faith. The problematic relationship of Islam with the sea, which is reflected in written as well as oral traditions, is linked with the limited development of a maritime culture on the southern and eastern shores of the Inner Sea. The incompatibility of sea life with Islam goes a long way to explain why Muslims missed the boat at the time of maritime expansion towards the New World, when there was still a relative power balance between Cross and Crescent in the Mediterranean area. To be sure, there are many exceptions to these generalizations and they deserve systematic and accurate research. The role of the sea in the rituals of coastal towns and villages around the Mediterranean is yet another fascinating topic that should be further explored, apart from the instrumental relationships coast-dwellers maintain with the sea.

Modern transients: tourists and migrants

A seaward perspective inevitably entails sustained interest in tourists and migrants as modern transients. Each year between June and September approximately 110 million tourists spend their holiday along the Mediterranean shores, making up one-third of the global tourist flow. In the light of this massive arrival of foreign, and more recently domestic tourists, the Inner Sea has taken on an entirely new meaning as an economic and social resource. Moreover, mass tourism has transformed and homogenized formerly diverse coastal landscapes with regard to buildings, economic and leisure activities, manners, and the perception and organization of time. It has also drastically affected centre-periphery relationships, the fragile coastal environment, and the quality of life in most Mediterranean countries. Although much research has already been done, the ongoing diversification of touristic demand and supply – for instance the emergence of Islamic beach tourism in Mediterranean Turkey or of retirement migration to Italy and Spain – is an important theme for further inquiry.

The massive counter-movement of Mediterranean migrants to the North is an equally sweeping phenomenon that needs enduring attention. During the past ten years the largely clandestine trans-Mediterranean migration has become a major socio-political issue within the European Union and will undoubtedly remain so for the coming decades. A seaward perspective pays special attention to the passages and connections across the Mediterranean with regard to transnational community formation, the exchange of consumer goods and information, and the distribution of symbolic, social, and religious capital. For instance, there is a growing conviction in the towns of northern Morocco that Islam is now coming from the European side of the Mediterranean with devout returning migrants who are often considered to be more 'true Muslims' than local ones. The ordeals of being a minority in a non-Islamic environment are said to strengthen Muslim devotion. Moreover, migrant communities across the Mediterranean have more freedom in creating associations than in Morocco.[2] This shifting of the Islamic frontier is a challenging topic for scholars of contemporary Islam.

Revival of Mediterranean cosmopolitanism?

A seaward perspective not only pays privileged attention to the sea and the people who use and cross it, but indeed also to the seaport, a settlement form that has received only scant treatment in the humanities and social sciences. The recent renaissance of Mediterranean seaports – Marseille, Barcelona, Genua, Alexandria, but also smaller ones, such as Algeciras and Koper – constitutes a fascinating field for interdisciplinary area research. The following questions may be raised: Are the maritime towns and cities foci of cultural convergence? What role did they play in the different stages of the globalization process? Less sweeping questions include notions of maritime urbanity, the impact of the port on town life, changing attitudes of coast-dwellers towards the sea, the revitalization of maritime identity, and its relationship with ethnicity, nationality, and transnationality.

Especially the link between Mediterranean seaports and cosmopolitanism is a promising research topic. If there is an ecological dimension to cosmopolitanism then the seaport is certainly one of its main niches, until recently probably the most important one. Awareness and knowledge of and openness towards the wider world have always been ingredients of maritime culture. What is of particular interest is *how* and *in which* contexts Mediterranean people, past and present, evoke cosmopolitanism; the meanings they attach to it; and how they assimilate understandings of cosmopolitanism into their behaviour. Greek refugees from former Smyrna and their descendants in Piraeus, old families in Tangier, Triest, and Alexandria, frequently evoke a past defined as cosmopolitan. In doing so they stress, in varying combinations, features such as ethnic-religious plurality, multi-lingualism, cultural refinement, openness, enterprise, tolerance, and intercultural exchange.

Thus, a basic question is whether the revival of seaports in parts of the circum-Mediterranean area goes hand in hand with a renewed emphasis on cosmopolitanism under changing political, economic, and technological conditions (think, for instance, of the impact of tourism, migration, and the mass media). In order to answer this broad question an interdisciplinary approach is needed in which a political-economic perspective is joined with a cultural and historical one and a broad gamut of research techniques and sources are combined. This implies a need not only for multi-local but also (and rather) for translocal anthropological, geographical, and historical research – in other words, research *on* and *in* the connections and passages between different localities and identities around the Mediterranean Sea. And, finally, it means a willingness to reconsider old regional categories and divisions such as 'Europe', 'North Africa', and 'the Middle East'.

This article is a summary of Henk Driessen's inaugural lecture held at the University of Nijmegen on 28 June 2002. For references, see Henk Driessen, Mediterrane passages. Een zeewaartse visie op een overgangsgebied *(Amsterdam: Uitgeverij Wereldbibliotheek, 2002).*

Notes

1. See *Oceans Connect*, 89 (1999), a special issue of *The Geographical Review*. For the Indian Ocean area see A. Wink, 'From the Mediterranean to the Indian Ocean: Medieval History in Geographic Perspective', *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 44 (2002): 416–45.
2. See M. Juntunen, *Between Morocco and Spain. Men, Migrant Smuggling and a Dispersed Moroccan Community* (Helsinki: Institute for Asian and African Studies, 2002).

Henk Driessen, Cultural Anthropology and Mediterranean Studies, University of Nijmegen, the Netherlands.
E-mail: H.Driessen@maw.kun.nl

realpatidar.com

https://archive.org/details/bk375/page/n37/mode/1up

2002-12 -The Tale of Hidden Pir -ISIM (375)

The Islamic Charter as a Tool for Integration

BPB
NATHAL M. DESSING

The Bundeszentrale f r Politische Bildung (BPB), Projektgruppe Migration, organized an international conference on 'Muslime und Islam in Europa: Die Integration einer religi sen Minderheit' at the Ost-West-Kolleg, Br hl, Germany, from 10 to 13 July 2002. The conference compared the processes of integration of Muslims in Western Europe and discussed the Islamic Charter drawn up by the Central Council of Muslims in Germany.

Article headings of the Islamic Charter
- Islam is the religion of peace
- We believe in a compassionate God
- The Qur'an is the verbal revelation of God
- We believe in the prophets of the one God
- Humankind will be held accountable on Judgement Day
- Male and female Muslims have the same task in life
- The five pillars of Islam
- Islam is at once faith, morality, social order, and way of life
- Islam does not aim at abolishing wealth
- Islamic law obliges Muslims in the diaspora [in principle to observe local law]
- Muslims accept the constitutionally guaranteed separation of powers, and the juridical and democratic order
- We do not aim at establishing a clerical theocracy
- There is no conflict between Islamic teaching and the core human rights
- [European culture is] formed by the [classical Greco-Roman and] Judeo-Christian-Islamic heritage, and the Enlightenment
- It is necessary to develop a specific Muslim identity in Europe
- Germany constitutes the centre of our interests and activity
- Reduction of prejudices through transparency, openness, and dialogue
- We are beholden to the whole of society
- Integration while maintaining Islamic identity
- An honourable way of life in the midst of society
- [We are] party-politically neutral

The conference brought together some 150 academics, teachers, politicians, activists, and journalists, including Mohammed Abdul Aziz (Forum Against Islamophobia & Racism, London), Soheib Bencheikh (Comité Régional des Affaires Islamiques, France), Coskun Çörüz (Member of Parliament, the Netherlands), Nadeem Elyas (Central Council of Muslims in Germany), Fatma-Zohra Messaoudi (Centre socio-culturel de la rue de Tanger, Paris), and Mohibur Rahman (Muslim Council of Britain).

The Islamic Charter is a document consisting of 21 articles developed by the Central Council of Muslims in Germany (Zentralrat der Muslime in Deutschland e.V., ZMD) and adopted in its general meeting of 3 February 2002. With this document the ZMD aims to promote dialogue among Muslims and not to exclude divergent opinions, says ZMD chair Nadeem Elyas.

The Islamic Charter may be regarded as a further example in a series of documents drawn up by governmental or representational bodies in various European countries that seek to describe or to codify the position of Muslims in Western societies. Another example, though different in status and origin, is the report 'l'Islam dans la République', drawn up in 2000 by the High Council on Integration, an advisory body to the French prime minister. The report treats the history of the separation of church and state in France, describes Muslims and Islam in France, and ends with recommendations. Such documents are vulnerable to criticisms concerning their representativeness and authority. This became clear in the discussions on the Islamic Charter at the Brühl conference.

Mohibur Rahman of the Muslim Council of Britain, for example, mentioned three concerns. According to him, emotional attachment to a country cannot be encouraged through a written document. Furthermore, he sees no reason for British Muslims to explain or justify nationality or religion, since they already feel that they belong. A Charter is in his view a defensive exercise and therefore undesirable. Lastly, he suggests that the Charter's aims could be better achieved by investing the time and effort in more practical ways.

Similarly, Nico Landman of Utrecht University regards increasing participation of Muslims in political processes and public debates as more important than the development of an Islamic Charter, which claims to speak on behalf of 'the Muslims'. He thereby alludes to the plurality of opinions among Muslims in the Netherlands.

Soheib Bencheikh, mufti of Marseille, was not sure if France needed an Islamic Charter. Taking an individualistic view of Islam, he believes that no one has the right to determine the theology of the future. He emphasized the importance of transparency, of avoiding provocation, of Muslim role models to display the beauty of Islam, and of imam-training institutions independent of the countries of origin and of the French government. He also argued that the idea behind the headscarf is the protection of the woman. Nowadays, this protection may also take the form of education and other skills. On this basis he advises women to dress tastefully and to be modest in their attire if they must choose between wearing the headscarf and a job.

These statements aroused much controversy, particularly among the British participants. Mohammed Abdul Aziz, for example, felt that the ethnic minority discourse in France and Germany concentrates on first-generation issues such as the headscarf, while the United Kingdom has long passed this phase. Muslims in Britain, says Abdul Aziz, speak about respect and diversity, and not about minorities as a problem. Barbara John of Humboldt University argued that the fear of difference and wish for homogeneity is deep-rooted in German society, whereas Britain tolerates diversity to a greater extent.

Thomas Krüger, BPB president, said that controversy, the guiding principle of political education, must be used to further discussions on the integration of Muslims. The lively discussions during the two days of the conference suggest that this aim, at least, was fully met. He announced that the BPB, in cooperation with the Goethe Institute and Deutsche Welle, is developing an Islam portal with information on the Muslim world and Islam and Muslims in Germany.

Dr Nathal M. Dessing conducts research on Islam in Europe and is ISIM educational coordinator.
E-mail: n.m.dessing@isim.nl

Political Islam in Sub-Saharan Africa

SEDET
CACO VERHEES

On 28 and 29 October 2002, the conference 'Political Islam in Sub-Saharan Africa: Narratives, Itineraries and Networks' was organized by the research institute SEDET (Soci t s en d veloppement dans l'espace et dans le temps) of the Universit Paris 7 Denis Diderot. The objectives of the conference were to identify, analyse, and define the actors of political Islam in the different countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, where Islam has often been referred to as an Islam of brotherhoods (*confr ries*). In earlier research the Islam of the brotherhoods is often depicted as peaceful and non-political, whereas the reformist groups are said to be political in scope and often use violence. But how do these trends actually relate?

Reformist groups do not always have a clear political agenda. They are first and foremost interested in purifying Islam from the traditional influences of the Sufi brotherhoods, like praying with a *chapelet* (chaplet), *maraboutage*, and the worship of saints. Some reformist groups, however, attract many brotherhood-affiliated members. Therefore, it seems that we should approach them as groups that react to and interact with each other and with the government. At the conference this was done from different angles. Bakary Sambe proposed to revisit the terrain of Islam in Senegal as it can no longer be understood in terms of this (simplified) dualism. The changes that took place in the last twenty years, the growing dynamics of the *confréries* that have not escaped modernization, the politicizing of the marabouts, and the external influence ask for a new approach, which – according to Sambe – should be interdisciplinary.

Marc-Antoine Perouse de Montclos, who presented his research on political Islam in Nigeria between 1803 and 2003, suggested an economic reading of political Islam. According to him most political Islamist groups have primarily economic interests. Furthermore, he thinks Islam nowadays is not more political than it was 200 years ago, and therefore the political dimension should not be over-emphasized. Souley Hassane discussed the marketing of Islam. To illustrate this, he mentioned the *marabouts guérrisseurs*, religious agents who are paid for their services, and the dowry. In addition to the economic, marketing, and electoral dimensions, Rüdiger Seesemann proposed a new dimension: 'the quotidian dimension'. He sees the dichotomy of 'reformists' and 'brotherhoods' as another way of saying 'modern' and 'traditional', respectively, which is not a reflection of what is happening in the field. He also critiqued the division between little and great traditions. In order to understand how people perceive Islam and everything related to it, researchers should look at the debates that take place on a local level (in the little tradition), because it reveals more about the debates at the top level (in the great tradition). In other words, researchers should contextualize Islam on the level of everyday life.

The (partial) implementation of *shari'a* in various West African countries was the subject of a number of papers. In Nigeria some states have now put into practice criminal law of the *shari'a*, and this has led to a storm of protest from Western states. Mukhtar Umar Bunza of the Usmanu Dan Fodiyo University of Nigeria focused on the influence of Iranian politics and ideology on political Islamic movements in Nigeria. While most Muslims in Nigeria would vote for implementation of the *shari'a*, the most extremist movement in Nigeria, Yan Shi'ah, is against it, because they believe true *shari'a* can only be realized after a successful jihad, after which the whole state will be an Islamic state. Thus, this group does not acknowledge the *shari'a* under a non-Islamic democratic government. Perouse de Montclos also argued that the *shari'a* can only be implemented in a Muslim state, affirming that *shari'a* legislation in Nigeria causes problems mostly related to two articles of the constitution: freedom of religion and freedom of movement. A Muslim who converts to Christianity in the north of Nigeria is sentenced to death. This conflicts with the article on freedom of religion. In the south of Nigeria there is the option to convert, but according to the freedom of movement a Christian should be allowed to settle in one of the Muslim states.

Several scholars focused on female Muslims. Fatou Sow, a Senegalese scholar and member of SEDET, warned of the resurgence of Islamist groups in Senegal. She is a feminist Muslim, and having fought all her life to free herself from a subordinate position, she considers these reformist groups as a threat to the achievements of the feminist movement in Senegal. More women in West Africa are wearing the *hijab* nowadays, which she sees as depriving women of their liberty. For her, the reformist movements use a *discours d'enfermement*, and are only interested in controlling women's sexuality and fertility. In contrast, Cleo Cantone (SOAS, London), herself a converted Muslim – wearing a veil – spoke about the veil as an opportunity for women in Senegal to practise Islam in the public sphere, instead of always being confined to their homes. While in the mosques of the brotherhoods women are discouraged from entering the mosque, the newly built Sunni mosques all have a space for the women to pray as well as a room where they can receive Qur'anic lessons. Cantone therefore considered veiling a positive development, interpreting it as empowerment (see p. 29).

realpatidar.com

The organizers of the conference hope the papers will be ready to be published at the end of 2003.

Caco Verhees is a Ph.D. candidate at the ISIM.
E-mail: c.verhees@isim.nl

https://archive.org/details/bk375/page/n38/mode/1up

Debate

KHALED RAMADAN

Art in the Aftermath of 11 September

As a cartoon figure, Dirk always dominates the last page of NU, *The Nordic Art Review*. One of Olav Westphalen's best Dirk strips is the one that follows the 9/11 – in his word – 'occasion' (NU vol. 111, no. 6/01). The first drawing starts by showing Dirk as an angry artist. The second shows him together with an art critic in a gallery where Dirk is telling the critic that we cannot go back to business as usual. In the third, Dirk underlines that artists have to rise to this historical occasion. In the forth drawing Dirk emphasizes that artists' work should be part of a mighty struggle for a truly democratic and peaceful world. The critic then comes to his senses and asks: 'How do you reflect all that in this new piece of yours?' While looking at a sculpture entitled *Perseverance* Dirk answers: 'Well it is a mould of the permanent dent I put into my couch while watching the CNN for two months.' The result is a positive cast of Dirk's ass.

PHOTO: STINE HOEXBROE, 2002

***American Football* (life size, 9mm bullets), by Khaled Ramadan.**

To chase the change and look for it in deliberate rational ways with known outcomes is not the way to practise art. Change should come as a natural reflection and not as a rational behaviour dictated by the mass media only. Artists who choose to switch and adjust their art production according to what they have heard on CNN, which keeps telling us that it is the time of change and that the world will never be the same, should try to take a neutral look into their behaviour. They have to ask themselves where they stand in relation to 'other' news, which we do not see on CNN. Since when did the world become static and unchangeable? It has always been exposed to and reflected fluxes and constant change in all fields and in all directions. The world never looks at itself at any moment of time. So 'it will never be the same' is just an empty statement.

Detector of change

In *FlashArt*, December 2001, Giancarlo Politti wrote that art has always been the sensitive detector of change and is a delicate seismograph of our time. If art is about detecting first and curing afterwards, why then did art activists not detect the other side of the coin? Can art activists afford the humanistic luxury of reacting seriously only to what is taking place within the American boundaries? If we look into what most visual artists did after 9/11, the majority went into writing, shocked and without knowing how to approach it. For those who chose to do it straight after the 'occasion', their achievement, as Dirk's, came from one source only, namely CNN. This unbalanced behaviour is what artists are supposed to abandon. So far columnists, writers, and authors have been pretty effective straight after 9/11. Voices from the USA, Germany, and the Arab peninsula were all busy condemning the 'occasion' but at the very same time answering those who say 'these things should not happen here, not in the US' with a 'well, these things should not happen anywhere'. Art should be concerned with all human communities and not only one of them. As Politti said, art should be humanity's most sensitive alarm, detecting changes within human communities at large, always using the same barometer of value judgement.

PHOTO: STINE HOEXBROE, 2002

***No UN* (life size), by Khaled Ramadan.**

Who is challenging what?

The role of art is not only to detect and react but also to challenge the unspeakable and the 'political correctness'. At any time, from art one must expect confrontation rather than confirmation. Therefore, art should be political and analytical if it wishes to keep its position as detector.

The latest challenge to the art world after 9/11 came in suit. Terrence Donahue of the FBI and Steven Smith of the Secret Service arrived at the Art Car Museum, an avant-garde gallery in Houston. *Secret Wars* was the title of the exhibition, which contained anti-war statements made before 9/11. Donna Huanca, who works in the gallery, stated that '[t]hey said we were displaying anti-American activities.' Huanca asked if they were familiar with the artists and emphasized the role of art at such a critical time. The agents were more interested in where the artists were from. They were pointing out negative things, like a new painting by Lynn Randolph of the Houston skyline on fire, and a devil dancing around with George Bush Sr. in the belly. The Art Car Museum's director, James Harithas, described the visit from the G-men as unbelievable. 'People should be worried that their freedoms are being taken away right and left.' Robert Dogium, the FBI spokesman, said the visit was just a routine follow-up on a call 'from someone who said that there is artwork of a threatening nature to the President'.

Another incidence which makes us think deeply before producing art after the world has decided to change itself is this:

On 26 October it knocked on the door of the art activist A. J. Brown: 'Hello, we're from the Raleigh branch of the Secret Service. We're here to check if you have anti-American material in your apartment.'
'Are you sure?'
'Yes, we got a report that you've got a poster of anti-American nature.'
'Have you got a warrant?'
No. But they wanted to come in and look around. They explained to Brown: 'We already know what it is. It's a poster of Bush hanging himself.' Well, then it's a poster with a target on Bush's head. The poster they were interested in was one that depicted Bush holding a rope, with the phrase: 'We Hang on Your Every Word. George Bush. Wanted: 152 Dead.' The agents kept looking at the walls that contained posters from the Bush counter-inaugural, a 'Free Mumia' poster, and a Pink Floyd poster with the phrase: 'Mother, should I trust the government?' Then they asked: 'Do you have any pro-Taliban stuff, any posters?'

Penetrating the Real Thing

The theorist Slavoj Zizek described the fall of the WTC comparing it to the Hollywood catastrophe as 'the element of truth'. Zizek writes that in Karl-Heinz Stockhausen's provocative statement that the planes hitting the WTC towers were the ultimate work of art, one can see the collapse of the WTC towers as the culminating conclusion of the 20th-century art's 'passion for the real'. The terrorists themselves did it not primarily to provoke real material damage but for the spectacular effect of it: the authentic 20th-century passion to penetrate the Real Thing. The Real Thing is what the world (including the art world but excluding the Hollywood planet) has been witnessing so far. The Real Thing has always been out of the Hollywood planet. But when the Hollywood planet was hit by reality, suddenly the world of our fantasy became a Universal Reality.

Slavoj Zizek plays with reality, authenticity, and the fake sphere in order to welcome the new and free world in joining the Real World. He says that '[t]he ultimate American paranoiac fantasy is that of an individual living in a small idyllic Californian city, a consumerist paradise, who suddenly starts to suspect that the world he lives in is a fake, a spectacle staged to convince him that he lives in a real world, while all people around him are effectively actors and extras in a gigantic show. These shots were always accompanied with the advance warning that 'some of the images you will see are extremely graphic and may hurt children' – a warning which we never heard in the reports on the WTC collapse.

We were told that nothing will be the same in the era of post-9/11. In reality things look different. September 11 means that nothing has really changed. The world's conflict patterns did not change a bit. Change as such did not emerge in art, politics, military, or – well, I cannot say that nothing happened to the economy. That alone will have its impact on all sectors including art. The collapse of the stock market in NY in the 1930s did indeed take with it the local and the overseas art life. Such economic changes are never without consequences. Yes, in that sense one can confidently say that world matters are getting worse.

Art activists in the shadow of the 'event' have to make a stand. Either you are with art or you accept everything your government says, whether it is true or false. Are the artists going to do something about it or are they going to wait for the CNN to do so?

Dear ART, Welcome to Slavoj Zizek's Desert of The Real.

realpatidar.com

Khaled Ramadan is a visual artist and architect, and is currently a Ph.D. candidate in art history at Copenhagen University, Denmark. He is also curator for the Nordic Institute for Contemporary Art since 2001.
E-mail: khaledramadan@get2net.dk

https://archive.org/details/bk375/page/n39/mode/1up

2002-12 -The Tale of Hidden Pir -ISIM (375)

Award

PRINCE CLAUS FUND

Principal 2002 Prince Claus Award

Prince Claus Awards

Since 1997, the Prince Claus Awards have been presented to people and organizations to recognize and encourage their exceptional achievements in the field of culture and development in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Caribbean. The Fund does not only honour artists, intellectuals, and cultural organizations for the high quality of their work. It also looks in particular at the positive changes they bring to their society and culture. The Principal Award is given every December during a festive ceremony at the Royal Palace in Amsterdam.

The Principal 2002 Prince Claus Award was awarded to Mohammed Chafik (b. 17 September 1926) on 11 December for both his academic oeuvre and his tenacious struggle for the emancipation of the Berber people. Chafik's academic endeavours culminated in his bilingual dictionary of Amazigh. This three-volume work in Amazigh and Arabic was published in 1990 (vol. I), 1996 (vol. II), and 2000 (vol. III). It compiled vocabulary collected from Morocco to Libya, from Algeria to Chad, and opened it up not only to Arabic speakers, but also to the Berbers, who found in this book a recognition of the richness of their language. This publication by the Royal Academy of Morocco is the first step towards achieving complete equality for the country's original language. Besides this *Dictionnaire Arabe-Berbère*, Professor Chafik has also produced work on the thirty-three centuries of Berber culture and has written several educational books.

As if this were not reason enough to present him with the award, there is also his tenacious battle for the emancipation of an original, but marginalized people of Morocco – the Berbers – from the Rif to the Atlas. Especially the Berbers found themselves compelled by poor living standards to migrate to foreign lands, including the Netherlands. This award is therefore also an acknowledgement of the Moroccan minority in the Netherlands. Professor Chafik's career has always been marked by his sense of solidarity with marginalized Berber culture. He has been an inspirational teacher, a school inspector, Secretary of State, and a tutor to the children of the royal family. He is currently Rector of the Royal Institute of Amazigh Culture, which was founded in 2001.

A clear line thus runs through his life, that of the insertion of Berber culture into the national and international life of his country. The written culmination of this work is the impressive *Manifeste Berbère* (2000). The title suggests a political pamphlet. However, the piece is much more than a list of political demands. It is an attempt to make transparent the history of Morocco, before and after the arrival of the French, before and after independence. He does this by replacing the silenced presence of the Berber-speaking population with its active presence as an often unhappy, but always present historical player.

The life of Mohammed Chafik, which has passed from the French colonial period, through independence, and into modern Morocco, makes him an experienced and irrefutable advocate for the liberation of Berber culture. His conclusions are aimed at a better future for Morocco: the need for a national debate on the position of the Berbers, a constitutional recognition of the language as a national language, a policy for deprived regions, an active insertion of the language in education and government, the erasure of prejudice from the accounts of the nation's history, opening up the media to the language of the people, and the right for parents to register their children under their Berber names, to name but a few.

His academic research and his work as an emancipator of Berber culture make Mohammed Chafik an obvious choice for the distinction of the Prince Claus Fund's highest award. Yet we might also add one more thing that distinguishes him: it is what we might call his cultural vision, which is that of an Islamic humanist. From the Qur'an he borrows the statement that the diversity of languages is a gift from God and quotes an old saying: 'Learn languages! The more languages you know, the more men you're worth.' The idea of turning Arabic into the only language of Morocco leads to impoverishment. The wealth and vitality of a culture is intrinsically bound with the extent to which it is able to absorb difference. Professor Chafik has thus developed a vision of cultural development as a process that contrasts sharply with thinking within a closed identity.

The Prince Claus Fund recognizes in Mohammed Chafik an ambassador for culture and development. By presenting him the award, the Prince Claus Fund is also endorsing a vision of the meaning of language and languages in the modern world: language is a mother tongue – which embodies the wealth of one's own cultural identity – a contribution to the future in which languages may be regarded as cultural treasure troves for global development, and the collective property of humanity.

Laudation address by Andriaan van der Staa, Chair of the 2002 Prince Claus Awards Committee, in honour of Mohammed Chafik, recipient of the Principal 2002 Prince Claus Award.

Project

WITTE DE WITH CENTRE

Contemporary Arab Representations

The Middle East is a region that is often overlooked in present-day exhibitions, and when it is not, the focus is mainly on traditional culture. The image that is presented thus denies the fact that contemporary Arab culture is a pilot region, a political and cultural laboratory that is highly complex. It is because of this complexity that Catherine David does not focus exclusively on 'contemporary art' in her new project, but also envisages the whole of cultural production, whether literature, philosophy, or journalism, as well as the images and the patterns of thinking that currently exist in the Arab world. This is what lies behind the project's title: *Contemporary Arab Representations*.

PHOTO: WALID SADEK, 2000

***I Do Not Think People Leave Hamra Street*, Hamra Street Project, Ashkal Alwan.**

Contemporary Arab Representations includes seminars, performances, publications, and presentations of works by different authors – visual artists, architects, writers, and poets – with the aim of encouraging production, interaction, and exchange between the different cultural centres of the Arab world and the rest of the world. The project aims to tackle heterogeneous situations and contexts that may sometimes be antagonistic or conflicting, and thus to acquire more specific knowledge about what is currently going on in certain parts of the Arab world, to look at the complexity of aesthetics in relation to social and political situations, and to encourage people to think more deeply about the role currently played by cultural practices in our own countries.

Beirut/Lebanon

'Beirut/Lebanon' was the first in a series of presentations. At present, Lebanon and the Middle East are essential to an understanding of contemporary culture: the post-war situation they are living through is complex – the Ta'if Accords do not guarantee definitive peace, and in this age of globalization, the country can be seen as an exceptionally important laboratory for a variety of reasons. Although Lebanon can no longer serve as a 'model' or 'exception' within the Arab world, the concern of many Lebanese intellectuals – immediately after the war – with the development and promotion of an experimental and critical contemporary Arab culture was sufficient reason to single out a group of authors who feel the need to meet and discuss a medium-term cultural project in their own city and in their personal context.

All the participants in the project aim to propose representations that can broach the reality of the city and the present conditions in urban society. And they all realize that there are no theories or forms that can encapsulate the phenomenological complexity of contemporary Beirut and Lebanon. Thus, as Saree Makdisi writes in his article 'Laying Claim to Beirut: Urban Narrative and Spatial Identity in the Age of Solidere', Lebanon can be understood not simply as a post-modern state but also as the first example of a state on a lease. Indeed, the interest of the country or the region is also linked to the need to find new instruments for analysing unprecedented dynamics, speeds, and configurations, the reverberations of which can be heard beyond the Middle East.

The unfolding of this project has been presented in different phases. It began with a seminar at the Universidad Internacional de Andalucía (UNIA) (22–26 October 2001) and continued with a colloquium at the Akademie Schloss Solitude in Stuttgart (7–9 February 2002). Several dossiers have been published in cultural journals, including the Arteleku magazine *Zehar* (issue 46/2002), *Springerin* (issue 2/2002), and *Camera Austria* (issue 78/2002). The project has been hosted by the Fundació Antoni Tàpies in Barcelona (2 May – 14 July 2002) and by Witte de With, centre for contemporary art in Rotterdam (14 September – 24 November 2002).

The project was accompanied by the publication *Tamáss 1*, which is the first in a series of publications about current Arab cultural discourse. *Tamáss 1* includes essays and projects by Walid Sadek, Jalal Toufic, Saree Makdisi, Tony Chakar, Bilal Khbeiz, Elias Khoury, Rabih Mroué, The Atlas Group Project/Walid Raad, Marwan Rechmaoui, and Paola Yacoub & Michel Lasserre. *Tamáss*, which means contact, touch(ing), contiguity, adjacency, or tangency (when combined as *khat tamáss* and *khoutout tamáss* it can also mean demarcation line(s) or confrontation line(s)),* seeks to create an open forum for debate and the exchange of ideas, images, and projects between different parts of the Arab world and the rest of the world.

Cairo/Egypt

At present, a new phase is being developed under the title 'Cairo/Egypt'. In the Arab world, communication is neither fluid nor easy; freedom of expression is still difficult. Egypt is an example of a culture that is affected by a lack of liberty. The project will encourage the particular strategies that are undertaken by the participants to achieve a truly uncensored analysis and critique.

Contemporary Arab Representations will thus create a new voice among those who only focus on the glorious past of the Arab world while totally overlooking or even denying its present or future. In contrast with this, it will stimulate progressive projects in order to show that Islamic extremism and archaism are not apparent in all aspects of Arab society.

Note

* Rohi Baalbaki, *Al-Mawrid. A Modern Arabic-English Dictionary* (Beirut: Dar El-Ilm Lilmalayin, 2001).

For further information, please contact Witte de With, centre for contemporary art, the Netherlands. E-mail: info@wdw.nl

Tamáss 1. Beirut/Lebanon
Price: 25 Euro
Illustrations in colour and black and white
23.5 x 17 cm, 168 pp.
English paperback
ISBN 84-88786-61-1

Tamáss 2. Cairo/Egypt is forthcoming (May 2003).

Link: http://www.realpatidar.com/library
email: mail@realpatidar.com

https://archive.org/details/bk375/page/n40/mode/1up

2002-12 -The Tale of Hidden Pir -ISIM (375)

Call for Papers

P.S. VAN KONINGSVELD

Religious Change in Pluralistic Contexts

'Religious Change in Pluralistic Contexts', an international congress to be held in Leiden, the Netherlands (28–30 August 2003), is organized by the Leiden Institute for the Study of Religions (LISOR) in cooperation with the Leiden Centre for Asian, African, and Amerindian Studies (CNWS). The central aims of the congress are to present relevant case studies of religious change and reinterpretation in pluralistic contexts derived from all periods and geographical areas of human history, and to contribute to theoretical reflection on the phenomenon of religious change in pluralistic contexts, so as to contribute ultimately to a more adequate understanding of this phenomenon in the modern age.

The common experience among most if not all ethnic minority religions in the West is the transition from a communitarian system to a secular system with Christianity as the dominant faith, where religions have to function within the private sphere in the first place. In Europe, Judaism experienced this transition primarily in the 19th century, in the Emancipation when Jews were granted citizenship in the European nation-states. Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, and many other religious traditions of non-Western origin, including African and Arab Christianity, experienced and continue to experience this transformation as a result of their (ongoing) transplantation to Western societies.

The transformation from one system to another is accompanied by many forms of religious reinterpretation and change, many of which may be related directly or indirectly to regulations (laws, political measures, jurisprudence) imposed by the nation-states in order to integrate religious institutions into the normative patterns of the dominant societies. They are often sanctioned by religious authorities under the influence of the social and cultural environment of their respective societies. Two dimensions may be distinguished in this context: (1) the behavioural dimension – e.g. changes in the practice of religious rituals, feasts, dress, and dietary codes, and in the application of religiously based principles of family law; and (2) the cognitive dimension – e.g. reinterpretations of normative religious traditions and dogmatic thought under the influence of dominant social customs and of prevailing philosophies.

Scholars of religious studies from all over the world are invited to submit their proposals (of one page maximum) for the congress before 1 February 2003.

Please send your proposals to:
Leiden Institute for the Study of Religions (LISOR)
Mrs B. d'Arnaud
E-mail: b.arnaud@let.leidenuniv.nl

Prof. Dr P.S. van Koningsveld is director of LISOR.
E-mail: p.s.van.koningsveld@let.leidenuniv.nl

ANNOUNCEMENT

UCSIA Summer Seminar

The UCSIA is an independent, international, and multidisciplinary college focusing on issues of religion, culture, and society. It is an offspring of the Saint-Ignatius University College of Antwerp (Universitaire Faculteiten Sint-Ignatius Antwerpen, UFSIA). Its main objective is to provide an international and interdisciplinary platform for academic research, education, and social services contributing to the creation of a better and more just society.

The UCSIA is holding a summer seminar on 'Christianity, Islam, and Judaism: How to Conquer the Barriers to Intercultural Dialogue?', to be held at Antwerp University, Belgium, from 15 to 26 September 2003.

If the prospect of clashing civilizations is to be avoided, a profound understanding of the barriers to intercultural dialogue is required. The seminar aims to contribute to building this understanding. The programme is geared towards gaining scholarly insight into historical, philosophical, religious, and socio-economic barriers to peaceful and prosperous intercultural exchange and cohabitation at local and global levels.

The seminar will offer a multidisciplinary experience. Barriers to intercultural and inter-religious dialogue are to be explored from different academic perspectives. Lectures and workshops will focus on the following themes: peace and conflict, nationalism and ethnicity, religious minorities, gender, human rights, secularization, religious identity, and new religious trends.

The seminar will be of interest to graduate students and scholars in the humanities (religious studies, philosophy, linguistics, history, and literature) and the social sciences (anthropology, sociology, law, and economics).

For more information, or to participate, please contact:
Barbara Segaert, Project Coordinator
Univ. of Antwerp, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences,
OASeS, Gratiekapelstraat 10, 2000 Antwerp, Belgium
Tel.: +32 3 220 49 70, Fax: +32 3 220 46 36,
E-mail: barbara.segaert@ua.ac.be
www.ufsia.ac.be/oases

ADVERTISEMENT

NOW AVAILABLE FROM IDC PUBLISHERS

Early Printed Books from Egypt at the Great Exhibition, London 1851

The Bulaq press was one of the first printing houses in the Arab world, its productions are of a remarkably high quality and the technical works have some fine drawings and plans. These rare titles will be of great interest to scholars of Arabic printing and book production. The Library of the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) acquired a small but valuable collection of Bulaq imprints, which are now being made available on microfiche by IDC Publishers.

The purpose of the Great Universal Exhibition in London was to present examples of all the best natural and manufactured products of the time. It is significant that the Egyptian government chose to send a collection of the products of the Bulaq press. The technical and scientific works are mostly in Arabic. Great care was taken by the editors of the Bulaq productions in translating new concepts into Arabic for the first time. The development of Arabic in its nineteenth century renaissance is currently the subject of a great deal of scholarly interest.

Scope
The collection consists of 98 different works in Arabic, Turkish and Persian

Military: 25
Science, mathematics and crafts: 21
Medicine: 19
Veterinary: 14
Humanities: 14
Historical: 5
Geography: 5
Literature, languages and ethics: 4

Number of fiche: 384

External finding aids:
Printed Bibliography by Peter Colvin, SOAS Library, with finding aids introductory text and indexes.

Including MARC21 Bibliographic Records

All titles available at www.idc.nl

IDC PUBLISHERS

For more information please contact any of the following addresses

The Netherlands
IDC Publishers
P.O. Box 11205
2301 EE Leiden

Phone +31 (0)71 514 27 00
Fax +31 (0)71 513 17 21
E-mail info@idc.nl
Internet http://www.idc.nl

For American customers only

North America
IDC Publishers Inc.
350 Fifth Ave., Suite 1801
New York, NY 10118

Phone 212 271 5945
Toll free 800 757 7441
Fax 212 271 5930
E-mail info@idcpublishers.com

https://archive.org/details/bk375/page/n41/mode/1up

2002-12 -The Tale of Hidden Pir -ISIM (375)

Contents

Stefano Allievi
Converts and the Making of European Islam
1

ISIM

Editorial
by Dick Douwes
2

Letter to the Editor
Hakan Yavuz
2

Scholarship and Activism in Islamic Family Law
Annelies Moors
3

Rights at Home: Tanzania Sounding Boards
Laila al-Zwaini
4

FEATURES

Martin Riexinger
The Islamic Creationism of Harun Yahya
5

CURRENT ISSUES

Arye Oded
Islam and Politics in Kenya
6

Martin van Bruinessen
The Violent Fringes of Indonesia's Islam
7

Pedro Brieger
Latin Islam since 11 September
8

Isa Blumi
Indoctrinating Albanians: Dynamics of Islamic Aid
9

ACTIVISM

Sindre Bangstad
Revisiting PAGAD: Machoism or Islamism?
10

Armina Omerika
Bosnian Young Muslims 1939–1991: A Survey
11

MIGRANTS

Sadik Harchaoui
Church and State in Multicultural Society
12

Agathe Petit
Dying a Senegalese Muslim in France
13

Miniya Chatterji
The Shi'a Imami Isma'ili Community in Canada
14

Gyorgy Lederer
Islam in Post-Socialist Hungary
15

LAW & SOCIETY

Alaine Hutson
Gender, Mobility, and *Shari'a*
16

Muhammad Khalid Masud
Islamic Law and Muslim Minorities
17

Jamila Bargach
Orphans of Islam: Family, Abandonment and Secret Adoption
18

PUBLIC SPHERE

Sami Zubaida
Religious Authority and Public Life
19

Moussa Khedimellah
Aesthetics and Poetics of Apostolic Islam in France
20–21

Aki Nawaz
Fun Da Mental Radical Music, Political Protest
22

MEDICAL ETHICS

Marcia C. Inhorn
Gender, Religion, and In Vitro Fertilization
23

PHILOSOPHY

Nader Hashemi
Alexis de Tocqueville and Democracy in Muslim Societies
24

Asma Afsaruddin
'Civil' and 'Democratic' Polity: A 9th-Century Treatise
25

RELIGIOUS PRACTICE

Dominique-Sila Khan
The Tale of the Hidden Pir
26

GENDER

Lara Deeb
Women's Islamic Community Service in Beirut
27

Marloes Janson
On the Boundaries of Muslim Gender Ideology
28

Cleo Cantone
Women Claiming Space in Mosques
29

Margot Badran
Bosnia: Re/turning to Islam, Finding Feminism
30

HISTORICAL APPROACHES

Claudia Preckel
Wahhabi or National Hero? Siddiq Hasan Khan
31

Xavier Luffin
Colonialism and Muslim Mobility
32

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

Joel Beinin
Neo-Conservatives Threaten Academic Freedom
33

MEDIA

Ren Romer
Advertising and Changing Demographics
34

RESEARCH APPROACHES

Henk Driessen
A Seaward View on a Transitional Region
35

CONFERENCE REPORTS

Nathal Dessing
The Islamic Charter as a Tool for Integration
36

Caco Verhees
Political Islam in Sub-Saharan Africa
36

ARTS & LITERATURE

Khaled Ramadan
Art in the Aftermath of 11 September
37

Prince Claus Fund
Principal 2002 Award: Mohammed Chafik
38

Witte de With Centre
Contemporary Arab Representations
38

realpatidar.com

ISIM Events

Inaugural Lecture: ISIM Chair at the University of Amsterdam
Annelies Moors
Date: 13 March 2003
Venue: University of Amsterdam, the Netherlands

Conference: The Anthropology of Islamic Law
Organizers: M.K. Masud, Annelies Moors, Léon Buskens
Date: 14–16 March 2003
Venue: Leiden University, the Netherlands

Workshop: Gender and Conversion to Islam
Organizer: Karin van Nieuwkerk
Date: 16–17 May 2003
Venue: University of Nijmegen, the Netherlands

Conference: Sufism and the Modern Urban Middle Class
Organizers: Martin van Bruinessen, Dadi Darmadi, Julia Howell, in cooperation with IIAS and Melbourne University
Date: 4–6 September 2003
Venue: Jakarta, Indonesia

Workshop: What Happened? Telling Stories about Law in Muslim Societies
Organizers: Annelies Moors in conjunction with CEDEJ, IFAO, and Utrecht University
Date: October 2003
Venue: Cairo, Egypt

For more information on these and other ISIM Events please consult the ISIM website or contact the ISIM Secretariat:
Tel: +31 71 527 7905
Fax: +31 71 527 7906
E-mail: info@isim.nl
www.isim.nl

ISIM WEBSITE

The ISIM website will soon be relaunched in order to provide better service and expand our online information resources. New sections will include up-to-date listings of ISIM and non-ISIM events, fellowships, grants, and a more accessible links section. All ISIM publications, including the *ISIM Newsletter*, the ISIM Papers Series, and the *ISIM Annual Report* will be available online. The new format will allow users to subscribe directly to the *Newsletter* and request back issues or other ISIM publications. We hope that the new site will become a valuable resource to researchers and all those interested in modern Islam. The ISIM welcomes your feedback and comments.

international institute **ISIM** for the study of islam in the modern world

The International Institute for the Study of Islam in the Modern World (ISIM) promotes and conducts interdisciplinary research on contemporary social and intellectual trends and movements in Muslim societies and communities.

ISIM Fellowships

The ISIM welcomes the following new fellows:

Ph.D. Fellows
- Nadia Sonneveld, M.A.: 'Reinterpretation of Khul' in Egypt: Intellectual Disputes, the Practice of the Courts, and Everyday Life'

Visiting Fellows
- Dr Armando Salvatore: 'Public Islam and the Nation-State in Egypt: Historical, Conceptual, and Comparative Dimensions'
- Dr Dominique-Sila Khan: 'A Hidden Heritage: Islamic Culture in Contemporary Pranami Communities in India'

Affiliated Fellows
- K.H. Hussein Muhammad: Collection of Islamic materials in the Leiden University Library and other libraries in the Netherlands
- Dr Salman Harun: 'Interpretation of the Qur'an in the West'

The ISIM invites applications and research proposals for various programmes. Applications from candidates in the social sciences, humanities, and religious studies will be considered. Applicants should be competent in academic English. The ISIM fellowships and their respective application deadlines are as follows:
- Ph.D. fellowships
  (1 March 2003 and 1 September 2003)
- Post-doctoral fellowships
  (1 March 2003 and 1 September 2003)
- Visiting fellowships
  (1 March 2003 and 1 September 2003)
- Sabbatical fellowships
  (1 March 2003 and 1 September 2003)

For more information on the various fellowships and for application forms, please consult the ISIM website.

ISIM Publications

The following ISIM publications are available at the ISIM.

Publications in the ISIM Papers Series include:
- *Islam, Islamists, and the Electoral Principle in the Middles East* (ISIM Papers 1)
  by James Piscatori
- *Thinking about Secularism and Law in Egypt* (ISIM Papers 2)
  by Talal Asad
- *Shari'a, State, and Social Norms in France and Indonesia* (ISIM Papers 3)
  by John R. Bowen
- *'Traditionalist' Islamic Activism: Deoband, Tablighis, and Talibs* (ISIM Papers 4)
  by Barbara D. Metcalf

Special ISIM Publications include:
- *Muslim Jurists' Quest for the Normative Basis of Shari'a* (ISIM Inaugural Lecture)
  by Muhammad Khalid Masud
- *New Voices of Islam*
  by Farish A. Noor (Interviews with Muslim Intellectuals)

The following publications are forthcoming:
- *Muslims, Minorities, and Modernity: The Restructuring of Heterodoxy in the Middle East and Southeast Asia* (ISIM Chair Inaugural Lecture)
  by Martin van Bruinessen
- *A Naqshbandi Télémaque*
  by Şerif Mardin (ISIM Papers 5)

realpatidar.com